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FRENCH'S STANDARD DRAMA.

No. LXXI.

KING LEAR.

A Tragedy

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE

WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, CASTS OF CHARACTERS,
COSTUMES, RELATIVE POSITIONS, ETC.

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CAST OF CHARACTERS.

	<i>Drury Lane, 1824.</i>	<i>Broadway, 1848.</i>	<i>Arch-St., Phila</i>
<i>King Lear</i>	Mr. Kean.	Mr. Forrest.	Mr. Booth.
<i>Duke Burgundy</i>	" Mercer.	" Baker.	" Gallagher.
<i>Duke of Cornwall</i>	" Penley.	" Reynolds.	" J. Dunn.
<i>Duke of Albany</i>	" Thompson.	" Kingsley.	" R. Johnson.
<i>Duke of Gloster</i>	" Powell.	" Matthews.	" Thayer.
<i>Duke of Kent</i>	" Terry.	" Vaché.	" Burton.
<i>Edgar</i>	" Wallack.	" Dyott.	" Henkins.
<i>Edmund</i>	" Young.	" Fredericks.	" Marsh.
<i>Oswald</i>	" Browne.	" Lester.	" T. Johnston
<i>Captain of Guard</i>	" Howell.	" Gallot.	" Hickman.
<i>Herald</i>	" Reed.	" Lonsdale.	" Fisher.
<i>Pages to Goneril</i>	Miss Smith.	Miss Pullmans.	Miss Morgan.
<i>Pages to Regan</i>	" Carr.	Misses Thompson & E. Pullmans.	" Atkins.
<i>Old Man</i>	Mr. Gattie.	Mr. Bernard.	Mr. Jervis.
<i>Physician</i>	" Hughes.	" Pope.	" Ellsler.
<i>Edward</i>	" Harold.	" Thompson.	" Tellings.
<i>Officer</i>	" King.	" Wright.	" Calladine.
<i>First Ruffian</i>	" Randall.	" Brady.	" Worrill.
<i>Second do</i>	" Atkins.	Mrs. Abbot.	Mrs. Hughes.
<i>Goneril</i>	Miss Boyce.	" Blake.	" M'Lean.
<i>Regan</i>	Mrs. Knight.	Miss F. Wallack.	" Burke.
<i>the</i>	" W. West.	Mrs. Isherwood.	Miss Sinclair.
	Miss Philips.		

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.

R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*
 .. E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; M. D. *Middle Door*

RELATIVE POSITIONS.

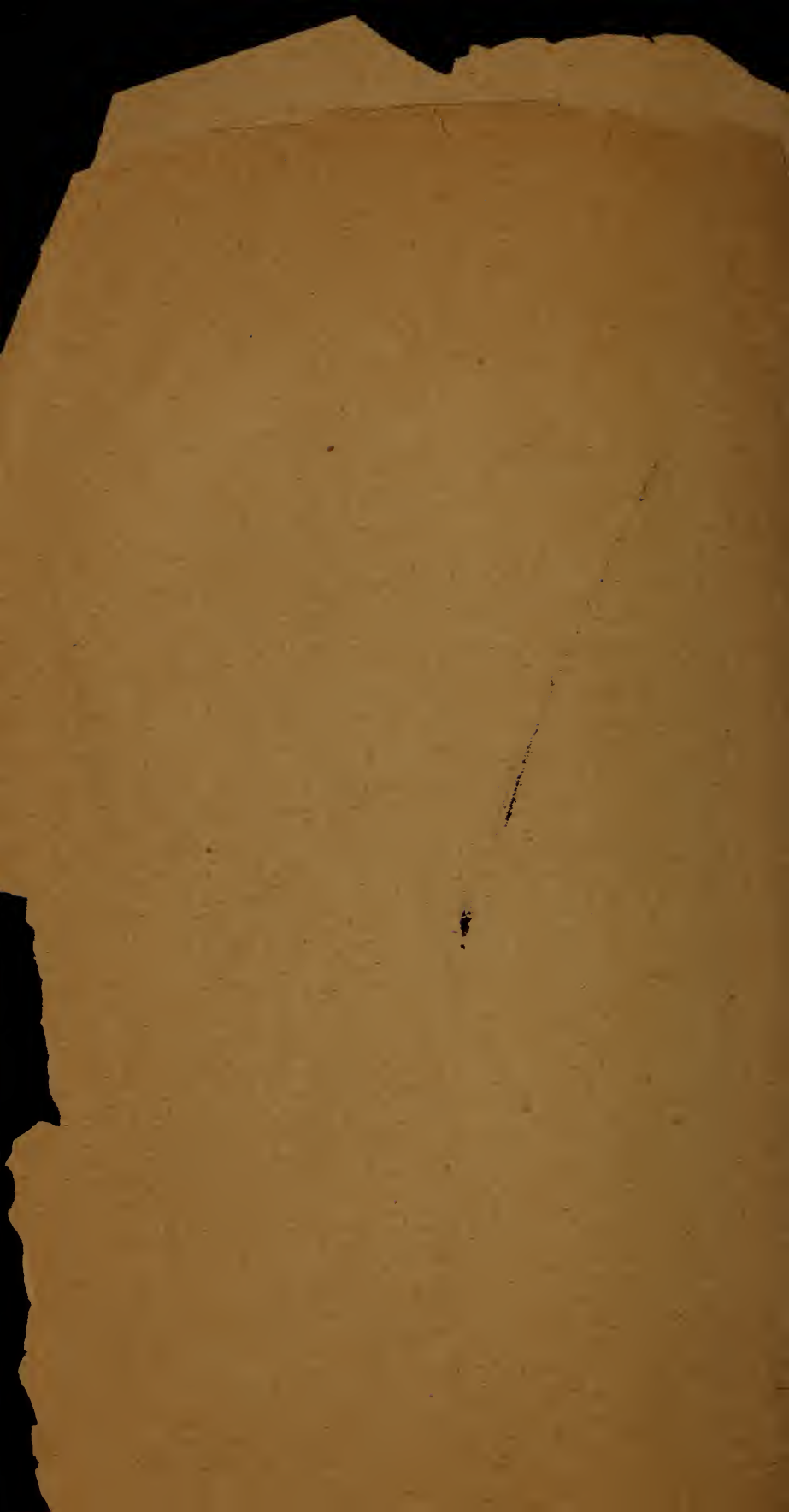
R., means *Right*; L., *Left*; C., *Centre*; R. C., *Right of Centre*
 .. C., *Left of Centre*.



Gift
 in C. A. Exec
 Mar. 30, 20

COSTUMES.

- KING LEAR.**—*First dress*:—Richly embroidered Saxon tunic of rich crimson velvet, ditto cap; flesh-coloured arms, legs, and sandals.—*Second dress*:—Black.
- DUKE OF BURGUNDY.**—Yellow Saxon tunic, crimson robe and cap, flesh-coloured arms, legs, and sandals.
- DUKE OF CORNWALL.**—Green tunic, scarlet robe and cap, flesh-coloured arms, legs, and red sandals.
- DUKE OF ALBANY.**—Crimson tunic, brown robe and cap, flesh-coloured arms, legs, and sandals.
- DUKE OF GLOSTER.**—Brown tunic, blue robe and cap, flesh-coloured arms, legs, and sandals.
- DUKE OF KENT.**—Crimson tunic, brown robe and cap, flesh-coloured arms, legs, and sandals.—*Second dress*:—Drab-coloured tunic and cap.
- EDGAR.**—*First dress*:—White tunic, scarlet robe and cap. *Second dress*:—Green tunic, and robe of coarse white baize. *Third dress*: Grey tunic and cap. *Fourth dress*:—Coat of mail, armour, and helmet.
- EDMUND.**—Scarlet tunic, blue robe and cap. *Second dress*:—Steel chain armour, helmet, and red plume.
- PHYSICIAN.**—Tunic and robe (all brown), trimmed with black.
- OLD MAN.**—Drab-coloured tunic and cap, flesh-coloured arms and legs.
- OSWALD.**—White tunic, blue robe and cap, flesh-coloured arms and legs.
- CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD.**—Scarlet tunic and cap, flesh-coloured arms and legs.
- PAGE TO GONERIL.**—White tunic, scarlet robe, and white cap.
- PAGE TO REGAN.**—Blue tunic, scarlet robe, and blue cap.
- GONERIL.**—White muslin dress, trimmed with gold, scarlet cloth robe, trimmed with gold, tiara for the head, flesh-coloured stockings and red sandals.
- REGAN.**—White muslin dress, trimmed with silver, and clasped together with metal clasps in front, fawn cloth robe, tiara for the head, flesh-coloured stockings, and russet sandals.
- CORDELIA.**—White kersemere dress and drapery, trimmed with scarlet velvet and gold lace, fastened in front with metal clasps, tiara for the head, flesh-coloured stockings and sandals. *Second dress*: White muslin dress, grey mantle, trimmed, black ditto, handkerchief for the head. *Third dress*:—White drapery.
- ARANTHE.**—Brown cloth dress, clasped together with metal clasps, fawn coloured mantle, bound with black.
- ATTENDANTS;**—White dress cloth robes, flesh-coloured stockings and russet sandals.



EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION.

THE story on which Shakspeare founded this magnificent tragedy, was long familiar to the English people. The sad story of "Lear and his three daughters," had been told in poem, ballad, and in many ruder ways, but the poet has, doubtless, more particularly availed himself of the chronicle of the History of the Kings of Britain, translated into Latin from the Armorican, or old British language, by Geoffrey of Monmouth, in the year 1100. This version of the old British chronicle was rendered into English by Hollinshed, the cotemporary of Shakspeare, and to whose historical chronicles the poet was indebted for much of the material of those matchless dramas which illustrate the history of the sovereigns of England. The story of "Lear and his three daughters," as given by Hollinshed is narrated thus:—

"Leir the sonne of Baldud was admitted ruler ouer the Britaines, in the yeare of the world 3105, at what tīme loas reigned in Iuda. This Leir was a prince of right noble demeanor, gouerning his land and subjects in great wealth. He made the towne of Caerleir, now cāked Leicester, which standeth vpon the riuer of Sore. It is written that he had by his wife three daughters without other issue, whose names were Gonorilla, Regan, and Cordeilla, which daughters he greatly loued, especially Cordeilla the yoongest farre aboue the two elder. When this Leir, therefore, was come to great yeres and began to waxe vniwieldie through age, he thought to vnderstand the affections of his daughters towards him, and preferre hir whome he best oued, to the succession ouer the kingdome. Wherevpon he first asked Gonorilla the eldest, how well she loued him: who calling hir gods to record, protested that she loued 'him more than hir owne life, which by right and reason should be most deere vnto hir. With which answer the father being well pleased, turned to the second, and demanded of hir how well she loued him; who answered (confirming hir sayings with great othes) that she loued him more than toong could expresse, and farre aboue all other creatures of the world.'

"Then called he his yoongest daughter Cordeilla before him and asked of hir what account she made of him, vnto whome she made this answer as followeth. 'Knowing the great loue and fatherlie zeale that you haue alwaies borne toward me (for the which I maie not answere you otherwise than I thinke, and as my conscience leadeth me) I protest vnto you, that I haue loued you euer, and will continuallie (while I liue) loue you as my naturall father. And if you would more vnderstand of the loue that I beare you, ascertaine your selfe, that so much as you haue so much you are woorth, and so much I loue you, and no more. The father being nothing content with this answer, married his two eldest daughters, the one vnto Hennisus the duke of Cornewall, and the other vnto Maglanus the duke of Albania, betwixt whome he willed and ordeined that his land should be diuided after his death, and the one half thereof immediatlie should be assigned to them in hand: but for the third daughter Cordeilla he reserued nothing.'

"Neurtheless it fortuneth that one of the princes of Gallia (which is now called France) whose name was Aganippus, hearing of the beautie, womanhood, and good conditions of the said Cordeilla, desired to haue her in marriage, and sent ouer to hir father, requiring that he might haue hir to wife: to whome answer was made, that he might haue his daughter, but as for any dower he could haue none, for all was promised and assured to hir and her sisters already. Aganippus notwithstanding this answer of deniall to receiue any thing by way of dower with Cordeilla, tooke hir to wife,

only moued thereto (I saie) for respect of hir person and amiable vertues. This Aganippus was one of the twelue kings that ruled Gallia in those daies, as in the British historie it is recorded. But to proceed

After that Leir was fallen into age, the two dukes that had married his two eldest daughters, thinking it long yer the gouernment of the land did come to their hands, arose against him in armour, and reft from him the gouernance of the land, vpon conditions to be continued for terme of life: by the which he was put to his portion. that is, to liue after a rate assigned to him for the maintenance of his estate which in processe of time was diminished as well by Maglanus as by Henninus. But the greatest grieft that Leir tooke, was to see the unkindness of his daughters, which seemed to thinke that all was too much which their father had, the same being neuer so little: in so much that going from one to the other, he was brought that miserie, that scarslie they would allow him one seruant to wait vpon him.

"In the end, such was the vnkindnesse, or (as I maie saie) the vnnaturalness which he found in his two daughters, notwithstanding their faire and pleasant words vttered in time past, that being constrained of necessitie, he fled the land, and sailed into Gallia, there to seeke some comfort of his yongest daughter Cordeilla, whom before time he hated. The ladie Cordeilla hearing that he was arriued in poor estate, she first sent him priuillie a certeme summe of monie to apparell himselfe withall, and to reteine a certeine number of seruants that might attend vpon him in honourable wise, as appertained to the estate which he had borne: and then so accompanied, she appointed him to come to the court, which he did, and was so ioifullie, honourable, and louinglie receiued, both by his sonne in law Aganippus, and also by his daughter Cordeilla, that his hart was greatlie comforted: for he was no lesse honoured, than if he had bene king of the whole cuntrye himselfe.

"Now when he had informed his sonne in law and his daughter in what sort he had bene vsed by his other daughters, Aganippus caused a mightie armie to be put in a readinesse, and likewise a great nauie of ships to be rigged, to passe ouer into Britaine with Leir his father in law, to see him againe restored to his kingdome. It was accorded, that Cordeilla should also go with him to take possession of the land, the which he promised to leave vnto hir, as the rightfull inheritour after his decesse, notwithstanding any former grant made to hir sisters or to their husbands in anio manner of wise.

"Herevpon, when this armie and nauie of ships were readie, Leir and his daughter Cordeilla with hir husband took the sea, and arriuing in Britaine, fought their enemies, and discomfited them in battel, in the which Maglanus and Henninus were slaine: and then was Leir restored to his kingdome, which he ruled after this by the space of two yeeres, and then died, fortie yeeres after he first began to reigne. His bodie was buried at Leicester in a vault vnder the channell of the fiuer of Sore beneath the towne.

"Cordeilla the yoongest daughter of Leir was admitted Q. and supreme gouernesse of Britaine, in the yeere of the world 3155. before the bylding of Rome 54, Vzia then reigning in Iuda, and Ieroboam ouer Israel. This Cordeilla after hir thers decesse, ruled the land of Britaine right worthilie during the space of fife yeeres, in which mean time hir husband died, and then about the end of those fife yeeres, hir two nephewes Margan and Cunedag, sonnes to hir aforesaid sisters, disaining to be vnder the gouernment of a woman, leuied warre against hir, and deuiroyed a great part of the land, and finallie tooke hir prisoner, and laid hir fast in ward, wherewith she tooke such grieft, being a woman of manlie courage, and despairing to recouer libertie, there she slue herselfe, when she had reigned (as before mentioned) the tearme of fife yeeres."

Shakspeare has left the main incidents of this fabulous tradition precisely as he found it, with all the features characteristical of the simplicity of the olden times; introducing, however, a double plot of Gloster and his sons, which he derived from another source. The addition, however, is most ingeniously worked up to add to the effect of the main purpose of the play. *Lear* has thus companions in his misery—he is suffering from his daughters, *Edgar* from his father: and the poetical justice of the play is equally dealt out to both offenders. There are few of Shakspeare's plays that have undergone more

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION.

mutilation in adapting them for stage representation than this tragedy of Lear. At the early part of the 17th century and the beginning of 18th, Shakspeare in his original dress had lost his influence over the minds of the play-goers—it was deemed expedient by the managers of that period to adapt, revise, and in many instances, entirely re-construct the leading plays of the great Bard, and in this shape only, were they rendered endurable to the audiences of those times—Hence, we have Tate's version of Lear, Cibber's Richard III., and Dryden's Tempest. All of which have kept possession of the stage until the present day.

THE MODERN STANDARD DRAMA, being a faithful transcript of plays as they are acted, we have necessarily taken Tate's alteration as our text book. Although it may be proper to state that the good taste of several leading representatives of the character of Lear, have deviated from his generally adopted version, and have restored, in modified forms, the original text of Shakspeare. The elder Kean when he revived *Lear*, immediately after the death of George III., during the latter part of whose reign this play was suppressed by authority, restored the original catastrophe of the tragedy, and the play closed with the death of Lear and Cordelia. Mr. Forrest has judiciously followed the example of his predecessor, and Mr. Macready, with that scholastic taste which so eminently distinguishes him, has gone further than either of his cotemporaries, for he has restored the entire original, excepting some necessary curtailments, rendered indispensable to meet the taste of modern audiences.

To add anything to the mass of critical analysis bestowed on this tragedy, seems to be a useless, and almost an impossible task—“Lear” stands almost alone in its towering sublimity, as the most perfect display of passion, and of “deep, ethical reflection.” Written when the author had arrived at the fullest development of his wonderful powers, it combines all the depth of his contemplative mind, and the most perfect display of his rich stores of bold and impassioned language. It has been well said of this play that the story exhausts compassion. The characters do not act, they suffer. Calamities stifle them at once; they are stripped of all external advantages at a blow, and are given up a prey to utter helplessness. *Lear's* childless imbecility is changed at once to helpless insanity. Cast off by his heartless daughters, he becomes a wandering beggar, with nothing left to him but the power of loving and suffering beyond measure. *Edgar* is rendered, by unmerited misfortune, a fitting companion for the hapless old king, and the joint picture is one of unapproach-

Ælness, pathos, and power. The suffering *Cordelia*, with her womanly dignity and filial love, and the touching fidelity of the "poor fool,"—the sterner integrity of *Old Kent*,—and the retributive calamities of *Gloster*—all conspire to form a tragedy which finds no equal in modern times.

The character of *Lear* has called forth the histrionic powers of our greatest tragedians. Garrick owes much of his transcendent fame to his personation of this part. John Kemble long held possession of the character undisputed and alone, until Kean burst on the theatrical horizon like a meteor, and disputed the palm with the classic Kemble in this, as well as in many other characters long held to be the exclusive property of THE KEMBLE! Booth's *Lear* is, in all its essentials, a close resemblance of Kean's. Macready, too, has added materially to his well-earned fame, by his beautiful delineation of this celebrated character. In this country, Mr. Forrest, the eminent native tragedian, who is not only the first American actor of the day, but has also founded what may be denominated a national school of acting, has acquired a reputation in both hemispheres, for his able personification of *Lear*. It is indeed a powerful embodiment of the part, combining all the characteristics peculiar to this great actor, and presenting also, the results of close and discriminating reflection. Mr. Hackett, whose versatility is almost unbounded, has ventured upon an embodiment of *Lear*, with a conception original and ingenious, which met with the approbation and endorsement of many sound critics and admirers of our great bard.

KING LEAR.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Ante-chamber in King Lear's Palace.*

Enter EDMUND, R.

Edm. (c.) Thou, Nature, art my goddess; to thy law
My services are bound: why am I then
Deprived of a son's right, because I came not
In the dull road that custom has prescribed?
Why bastard? Wherefore base? when I can boast
A mind as gen'rous, and a shape as true,
As honest madam's issue? Why are we
Held base, who in the lusty stealth of Nature
Take fiercer qualities than what compound
The scanted births of the stale marriage-bed?
Well, then, legitimate Edgar, to thy right
Of law I will oppose a bastard's cunning.
Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund
As to legitimate Edgar; with success
I've practised yet on both their easy natures.
Here comes the old man, chafed with the information
Which last I forged against my brother Edgar:
A tale so plausible, so boldly uttered,
And heightened by such lucky accidents,
That now the slightest circumstance confirms him,
And base-born Edmund, spite of law, inherits. (R.)

Enter GLOSTER and KENT, L.

Glos. Nay, good my lord, your charity
Oershoots itself, to plead in his behalf;
You are yourself a father, and may feel
The sting of disobedience from a son
First born and best-beloved.—Oh, villain Edgar!

Kent. (L) Be not too rash; all may be forgery,
And time yet clear the duty of your son.

Glos. (c.) Plead with the seas, and reason down the
winds,

Yet shalt thou ne'er convince me; I have seen
His foul designs through all a father's fondness.

Edm. [*Aside.*] It works as I could wish; I'll show my
self. [*Advances.*

Glos. Ha, [*Crosses to Edmund, R.*] Edmund! welcome
boy.—Oh, Kent! see here

Inverted nature, Gloster's shame and glory:

This bye-born, the wild sally of my youth,

Pursues me with all filial offices;

Whilst Edgar, begged of heaven, and born in honour,

Draws plagues upon my head, that urge me still

To curse in age the pleasure of my youth.

Nay, weep not, Edmund, for thy brother's crimes.

Oh, gen'rous boy! thou shar'st but half his blood,

Yet lov'st beyond the kindness of a brother:

But I'll reward thy virtue. Follow me.

My lord, you wait the king, who comes resolved

To quit the toils of empire, and divide

His realms amongst his daughters. Heaven succeed it!

But much I fear the change.

Kent. I grieve to see him

With such wild starts of passion hourly seized,

As render majesty beneath itself.

Glos. Alas! 'tis the infirmity of his age:

Yet has his temper ever been unfixt,

Chol'ric, and sudden.

[*Flourish of Trumpets and Drums, R.*

Hark, they approach.

[*Flourish.—Exeunt, R.*

Enter CORDELIA, L., EDGAR following.

Edg. Cordelia, royal fair, turn yet once more,

And ere successful Burgundy receive

The treasure of thy beauties from the king,

Ere happy Burgundy forever fold thee,

Cast back one pitying look on wretched Edgar.

Cor. Alas! what would the wretched Edgar with

The more unfortunate Cordelia?

Who, in obedience to a father's will,

Flies from her Edgar's arms to Burgundy's.

[*Flourish continues till the Scene changes.—Exeunt Cordelia, R., Edgar, L.*]

SCENE II.—*A Room of State in the Palace.—Flourish of Drums and Trumpets, R.*

KING LEAR seated upon his Throne, ALBANY, CORNWALL BURGUNDY, KENT, GLOSTER, GONERIL, REGAN, CORDELIA, CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD, three Knights, two Pages two Gentlemen with the Map, two Gentlemen with the Crown, Physicians, Herald, Banners and Guards Lords, Ladies, &c., &c., discovered.

Lear. (c.) Attend, my lords of Albany and Cornwall, With princely Burgundy.

Alb. (L. c.) We do, my liege.

Lear. Give me the map.

[*The Gentleman who holds the Map, L., advances a little, and unrolls it.*]

Know, lords, we have divided
In three our kingdom, having now resolved
To disengage from our long toil of state,
Conferring all upon your younger years.
You, Burgundy, Cornwall, and Albany,
Long in our court have made your amorous sojourn,
And now are to be answered. Tell me, my daughters,
Which of you loves us most, that we may place
Our largest bounty with the largest merit.
Goneril, our eldest born, speak first.

Gon. (R. c.) Sir, I do love you more than words can utter,

Beyond what can be valued rich or rare ;
Nor liberty, nor sight, health, fame, or beauty,
Are half so dear ; my life for you were vile ;
As much as child can love the best of fathers.

Lear. Of all these bounds, e'en from this line to this,
With shady forests, and wide skirted meads,
We make thee, lady ; to thine and Albany's issue
Be this perpetual.—What says our second daughter,
Regan, wife to Cornwall ?

Reg. (R. c.) My sister, sir, in part exprest my love ;
For such as hers, is mine, though more extended :

Sense has no other joy that I can relish
I have my all in my dear liege's love.

Lear. Therefore, to thee and thine hereditary,
Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom.

Cor. (R.) [Aside.] Now comes my trial. How am I
distrest,
That must with cold speech tempt the chol'ric king
Rather to leave me dowerless, than condemn me
To Burgundy's embraces!

[*Whilst Cordelia is speaking, Lear, assisted by Kent
and Gloster, descends from the Throne, and comes
forward, c.—Kent goes before Burgundy, L., and
Gloster remains at Lear's R., a little behind him.*]

Lear. Speak now, our last, not least in our dear love—
So ends my task of state—Cordelia, speak;
What caust thou say to win a richer third,
Than what thy sisters gained?

Cor. [Aside.] Now must my love, in words, fall short of
theirs,
As much as it exceeds in truth.—Nothing, my lord.

Lear. Nothing?

Cor. Nothing.

Lear. Nothing can come of nothing: speak again.

Cor. Unhappy am I that I can't dissemble:
Sir, as I ought, I love your majesty,
No more, nor less.

Lear. Take heed, Cordelia,
Thy fortunes are at stake; think better on't,
And mend thy speech a little.

Cor. (R.) Oh, my liege!
You gave me being, bred me, dearly loved me
And I return my duty as I ought,
Obey you, love you, and most honour you.
Why have my sisters husbands, if they love you all!
Haply, when I shall wed, the lord whose hand
Shall take my plight, will carry half my love;
For I shall never marry like my sisters,
To love my father all.

Lear. (c.) And goes thy heart with this?
'Tis said that I am chol'ric. Judge me, gods,
Is there not cause? Now, minion, I perceive
The truth of what has been suggested to us.

Thy fondness for the rebel son of Gloster.—
 And oh! take heed, rash girl, lest we comply
 With thy fond wishes, which thou wilt too late
 Repent; for know, our nature cannot brook
 A child so young, and so ungentle.

Cor. So young, my lord, and true.

Lear. Thy truth, then, be thy dower:
 For, by the sacred Sun, and solemn Night,
 I here disclaim all my paternal care,
 And from this minute hold thee as a stranger
 Both to my blood and favour.

Kent. (L.) This is frenzy!
 Consider, good my liege—

Lear. Peace, Kent!

Come not between a dragon and his rage.
 I loved her most, and in her tender trust
 Designed to have bestowed mine age at ease.
 So be my grave my peace, as here I give
 My heart from her, and with it all my wealth!

[*The Gentleman who holds the Crown advances from*
R. to R. C.]

My lords of Cornwall and of Albany,
 I do invest you jointly with full right
 In this fair third, Cordelia's forfeit dower.
 Mark me, my lords, observe our last resolve:
 Ourselves, attended by an hundred knights,
 Will make abode with you in monthly course;
 The name alone of king remain with me,
 Yours be the execution and revenues.
 This is our final will; and, to confirm it,
 This coronet part between you.

Kent. [*Kneels.*] Royal Lear,
 Whom I have ever honoured as my king,
 Loved as my father, as my master followed,
 And, as my patron, thought on in my prayers—

Lear. Away! the bow is bent, make from the shaft.

Kent. [*Rises.*] No, let it fall, and drench within my
 heart:

Be Kent unmannerly when Lear is mad;
 Thy youngest daughter—

Lear. On thy life, no more!

Kent. What wilt thou do, old man?

Lear. Out of my sight.

Kent. See better first.

Lear. Now, by the gods—

Kent. Now, by the gods, rash king, thou swear'st in vain!

[*Lear attempting to draw his sword, is prevented by Albany and Gloster, who advance and stay his arms.*

Lear. Ha, traitor!

Kent. Do, kill thy physician, Lear;

Strike through my throat; yet with my latest breath
I'll thunder in thine ear my just complaint,
And tell thee to thy face that thou dost ill.

Lear. Hear me, rash man, on thine allegiance hear me!

[*Sheathes his sword.—Albany and Gloster retire to their former places.*

Since thou hast striven to make us break our vow,
And pressed between our sentence and our power,
Which nor our nature nor our place can bear,
We banish thee forever from our sight
And kingdom: If, when three days are expired,
Thy hated trunk be found in our dominions,
That moment is thy death.—Away!

[*Turns from Kent, and confers with Goneril, Regan, Albany, and Cornwall.*

Kent. (L.) Why, fare thee well, king; since thou art
resolved,

I take thee at thy word: I will not stay
To see thy fall. The gods protect thee, maid,
That truly thinks, and hast most justly said.
Thus to new climates my old trunk I bear;
Friendship lives hence, and banishment is here. [*Exit, &c.*

Lear. Now, Burgundy, you see her price is fall'n;
Yet, if the fondness of your passion still
Affect her as she stands, dow'rless, and lost
In our esteem, she's yours; take her, or leave her.

Bur. Pardon me, royal Lear: I but demand
The dower yourself proposed, and here I take
Cordelia by the hand, Duchess of Burgundy.

Lear. Then leave her, sir; for, by a father's rage,
I tell you all her wealth.

[*Cordelia throws herself at Lear's feet.*

Away! Away! Away!

[*Flourish of Trumpets.—Exeunt all but Cordelia, &c.*

Enter EDGAR, R. U. E., and raises Cordelia.

Edg. (c.) Has Heaven then weighed the merit of my
love,

Or is it the raving of a sickly thought?
Could Burgundy forego so rich a prize,
And leave her to despairing Edgar's arms?

[*Raises Cordelia, L.*

Smile, Princess, and convince me; for, as yet,
I doubt, and dare not trust my dazzling joy.

Cor. Some comfort yet, that 'twas no vicious blot
That has deprived me of a father's grace;
But merely want of that, that makes me rich
In wanting it: a smooth professing tongue.
Oh, sisters! I am loth to call your fault
As it deserves; but use our father well,
And wronged Cordelia never shall repine.

Edg. Oh, heav'nly maid! thou art thyself thy dow'r,
Richer in virtue than the stars in light;
If Edgar's humble fortunes may be graced
With thy acceptance, at thy feet he lays them.
Ha! my Cordelia, dost thou turn away?
What have I done t'offend thee?

Cor. Talked of love.

Edg. Then I've offended oft; Cordelia, too,
Has oft permitted me so to offend.

Cor. When, Edgar, I permitted your addresses,
I was the darling daughter of a king!
Nor can I now forget my royal birth,
And live dependent on my lover's fortune;
I cannot to so low a fate submit;
And therefore study to forget your passion,
And trouble me upon this theme no more. [*Crosses to R.*

Edg. Thus majesty takes most state in distress.
How are we tossed on Fortune's fickle flood!
The wave that with surprising kindness brought
The dear wreck to my arms, has snatched it back,
And left me mourning on the barren shore.

Cor. This baseness of the ignoble Burgundy
Draws just suspicion on the race of men;
His love was int'rest, so may Edgar's be,
And he out wi'h more compliment dissemble.

If so, I shal. oblige him by denying ;
 But, if his love be fixed, such constant flame
 As warms my breast, if such I find his passion,
 My heart as grateful to his truth shall be,
 And cold Cordelia prove as kind as he.

Exit, R.

Enter EDMUND, hastily, L.

Edm. Brother, I've found you in a lucky minute ;
 Fly, and be safe ! some villain has incens'd
 Our father against your life.

Edg. Distressed Cordelia !—but, oh, more cruel !—

Edm. Hear me, sir ; your life, your life's in danger
 'Wake, 'wake, sir.

Edg. Say you, brother ?—

No tears, good Edmund ; if thou bring'st me tidings
 To strike me dead, for charity delay not ;
 That present will befit so kind a hand.

Edm. Your danger, sir, comes on so fast,
 That I want time t'inform you ; but retire,
 Whilst I take care to turn the pressing stream.
 Oh, gods ! for heaven's sake, sir—

Edg. Pardon me, Edmund ;
 But you talked of danger,
 And wished me to retire.—Must all our vows
 End thus ?—Friend, I obey you.—Oh, Cordelia !

Exit R.

Edm. Ha ! ha ! Fond man ! Such credulous honesty
 Lessens the glory of my artifice ;
 His nature is so far from doing wrongs,
 That he suspects none. [*Takes out a letter.*] If this letter
 speed,

And pass for Edgar's, as himself would own
 The counterfeit, but for the foul contents,
 Then my designs are perfect.—Here comes Gloucester.

[*Attempts to conceal the letter.*]

Enter GLOSTER, L.

Glos. Stay, Edmund, turn ; what paper were you read-
 ing ?

Edm. A trifle, sir

Glos. What needed, then, that terrible despatch of it
 Into your pocket ? Come, produce it, sir.

Edm. A letter from my brother, sir I had
Just broke the seal, but know not the contents :

[*Gives the letter to Gloster.*

Yet, fearing they might prove to blame,
Endeavour'd to conceal it from your sight.

Glos. This is Edgar's character.

[*Reads.*] " *This policy of father's is intolerable, that keep
our fortunes from us till age will not suffer us to enjoy them,
I am weary of the tyranny. Come to me, that of this I
may speak more. If our father would sleep till I waked
him, you should enjoy half his possessions, and live beloved
of your brother.*"

Sleep till I waked him, you should enjoy
Half his possessions!—Edgar to write this
'Gainst his indulgent father! Death and hell!

[*Crosses, R.*

Fly, Edmund, seek him out; wind me into him,
That I may bite the traitor's heart, and fold
His bleeding entrails on my vengeful arm.

Edm. Perhaps 'twas writ, my lord, to prove my virtue

Glos. These late eclipses of the sun and moon
Can bode no less; love cools, and friendship fails;
In cities mutiny, in countries discord;
The bond of nature cracked 'twixt son and father.—
Find out the villain! do it carefully,
And it shall lose thee nothing.

[*Exit, R.*

Edm. So, now my project's firm; but, to make sure,
I'll throw in one proof more, and that a bold one;
I'll place old Gloster where he shall o'erhear us
Confer of this design; whilst to his thinking,
Deluded Edgar shall accuse himself.
Be honesty my int'rest, and I can
Be honest, too; and what saint so divine,
That will successful villainy decline.

[*Exit, R.*

SCENE III.—*The Court before the Duke of Albany's Palace.*

Enter KENT, disguised, R.

Kent. Now, banished Kent, if thou can'st pay thy duty
In this disguise, where thou dost stand condemned,
Thy master Lear shall find thee full of labours.

[*Retires a little, R.*

Enter KING LEAR, attended by his Physician, and three Knights, L.

Lear. (L.) In there, and tell our daughter we are here.
[*Exit 1st Knight, R.*

Now, what art thou?

[*Kent advances, R.*

Kent. A man, sir.

Lear. What dost thou profess, or would'st with us?

Kent. I do profess to be no less than I seem, to serve him truly that puts me in trust, to love him that's honest, to converse with him that's wise and speaks little, to fight when I can't choose, and to eat no fish.

Lear. I say, what art thou?

Kent. A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor as the king.

Lear. If thou art as poor for a subject as he is for a king, thou art poor enough.—Dost thou know me, fellow?

Kent. No, sir; but you have that in your countenance which I would fain call master.

Lear. What's that?

Kent. Authority.

Lear. What services canst thou do?

Kent. I can keep honest counsel, mar a curious tale in the telling, deliver a plain message bluntly; that which ordinary men are fit for, I am qualified in; and the best of me is diligence.

Lear. How old art thou?

Kent. Not so young, sir, to love a woman for singing; nor so old, to dote on her for anything: I have years on my back forty-eight.

Lear. Thy name?

Kent. Caius.

Lear. Follow me; thou shalt serve me.

[*Kent goes R. of 2d Knight.*

Enter OSWALD, L., singing, and passing King Lear carelessly.

Now, sir?

Osw. Sir!—Tol de rol, &c. [*Exit, singing, R.*

Lear. What says the fellow? call the clodpole back.
[*Exeunt Kent and 2d Knight, R.*

Physic. (L.) My lord, I know not : but, methinks, your nighness is entertained with slender ceremony.

Lear. Say'st thou so ?
Thou but remember'st me of mine own conception.

Re-enter SECOND KNIGHT, R.

Why came not that slave back when I called him ?

2d Knight. (R.) My lord, he answered i' th' surliest manner, that he would not. [*Goes to his former place.*]

Lear. (L. c.) I hope our daughter did not so instruct him.

OSWALD is brought in by KENT, who puts him next to the King.

Now, who am I sir ?

Osw. (c.) My lady's father.

Lear. My lady's father ! My lord's knave !

[*Strikes him.*]

Osw. I'll not be struck, my lord.

Kent. Nor tript neither, you vile civet box.

[*Trips up his heels.*]

Lear. I thank thee, fellow : thou serv'st me.

Kent. Come, sir, arise, away ; I'll teach you differences.

[*Exit Oswald, crying out, R. U. E.—Kent pursues him with his staff till he is off the Stage, then returns to the Knights, L.*]

Gon. [*Within, R.*] By day and night, this is insufferable ! I will not bear it !

Enter GONERIL, R. U. E, attended by a Page and two Ladies.

Lear. (c.) Now, daughter, why that frontlet on ?
Speak, does that frown become our presence ?

Gon. (R.) Sir, this licentious insolence of your servants is most unseemly : hourly they break out
In quarrels, bred by their unbounded riots ;
I had fair hope, by making this known to you,
To have had a quick redress ; but find, too late,
That you protect and countenance their outrage ;
And therefore, sir, I take this freedom, which
Necessity makes discreet.

Lear. Are you cur laughter ?

Gon. Come, sir, let me entreat you to make use
Of your discretion, and put off betimes
This disposition that of late transforms you
From what you rightly are.

Lear. Does any here know me? Why, this is not
Lear!
Does Lear walk thus? Speak thus? Where are his
eyes?

Who is it that can tell me who I am
Your name, fair gentlewoman?

Gon. Come, sir, this admiration's much o' th' savour
Of other your new humours; I beseech you
To understand my purposes:
As you are old, you should be staid and wise:
Here do you keep an hundred knights and 'squires,
Men so debauched and bold, that this our palace
Shews like a riotous inn, a tavern, brothel:
Be then advised by her, that else will take
That which she begs, to lessen your attendants;
Take half away, and see that the remainder
Be such as may befit your age, and know
Themselves and you.

Lear. Darkness and devils!—
Saddle my horses, call my train together.
Degenerate viper! I'll not stay with thee;
I yet have left a daughter—Serpent! Monster!—
Lessen my train, and call them riotous!
All men approved, of choice and rarest parts,
That each particular of duty know.—
How small, Cordelia, was thy fault!—Oh, Lear,
Beat at this gate—[*Strikes his head.*]—that let thy folly in,
And thy dear judgment out! Go, go, my people.

Enter ALBANY, R. U. E.

Ingrateful Duke!—Prepare my horses.—Was this your
will?

Who stirs?

[*Exit 3d Knight.*]

Alb. What, sir?

Lear. Death! fifty of my followers at a clap!

Alb. [*To Goneril.*] The matter, madam?

Gon. Never afflict yourself to know the cause,
But give nis dotage way

Lear. Blasts upon thee!
Th' untented woundings of a father's curse
Pierce every sense about thee!—Old fond eyes,
Beweep this cause again, I'll pluck ye out,
And cast ye, with the waters that ye lose,
To temper clay.—No, Gorgon! thou shalt find
That I'll resume the shape which thou dost think
I have cast off forever.

Gon. (R.) Mark ye that?

Alb. (R. C.) I'm ignorant—

Lear. (L.) It may be so, my lord.—[*Throws away his hat and staff as he falls on his knees.*] Hear, Nature, hear;

Dear goddess, hear! Suspend thy purpose, if
Thou didst intend to make this creature fruitful!
Into her womb convey sterility!
Dry up in her the organs of increase;
That from her derogate body never spring
A babe to honour her.—If she must teem,
Create her child of spleen; that it may live,
And be a thwart, disnatured torment to her!
Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth;
With cadent tears fret channels in her cheeks;
Turn all her mother's pains and benefits
To laughter and contempt; that she may feel
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is,
To have a thankless child!

[*Kent and the Physician raise the King—the First Knight takes up his hat and staff.*]

Away! away!

[*Exeunt, King Lear and his Attendants, L., Albany Goneril, and their Attendants, R.*]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Earl of Gloucester's Castle*

Enter EDMUND, L.

Edm. (L.) The duke comes here to-night; I'll take advantage
Of this arrival to complete my project. [*Knocks, M. D.*
Brother, a word; come forth—'tis I, your friend!

Enter EDGAR, M. D., and comes forward.

My father watches for you, fly this place;
Intelligence is given where you are hid!
Take the advantage of the night.—Bethink,
Have you not spoke against the Duke of Cornwall,
Something might show you a favourer of
Duke Albany's party?

Edg. (R.) Nothing; why ask you?

Edm. (L.) Because he's coming here to-night in haste,
And Regan with him.

Edg. Let him come on; I'll stay and clear myself.

Edm. Your innocence at leisure may be heard,
But Gloucester's storming rage as yet is deaf,
And you may perish ere allowed the hearing.

[*Gloucester without, L.*

This way, this way!

I hear our father coming—Pardon me:—

In cunning I must draw my sword upon you:—

Draw: seem to defend yourself: [*They draw and fight.*
now quit you well.

Yield! come before my father! help, ho, here!—

Fly, brother! help, here, help!—Farewell, farewell!—

[*Exit Edgar, R.*

Some blood drawn on me would beget opinion
Of our more fierce encounter. I have seen
Drunkards do more than this in sport.

[*Stabs himself in the arm.*

Enter GLOSTER and two Servants, L., with torches.

Glos. Now, Edmund, where's the traitor?

Edm. Here stood he in the dark, his sharp sword out
Mumbling of wicked charms.

Glos. But where is he?

Edm. Look, sir, I bleed! [*Wraps his arm up.*]

Glos. Where is the villain, Edmund?

Edm. Sir, he is fled. When by no means he could—

Glos. By no means what?

Edm. Persuade me to the murder of your lordship;
But that I told him the revenging gods
Gainst parricides did all their thunders bend;
Spoke with how manifold and strong a bond
The child was bound to the father;—sir, in fine,
Seeing how loathly opposite I stood
To this unnatural purpose, in fell motion,
With his prepared sword, he charges home
My unprovided body, lanced mine arm:
But when he saw my best alarmed spirits,
Bold in the quarrel's right, roused to the encounter,
Or whether gasted by the noise I made,
I all suddenly he fled.

Glos. Let him fly far, this kingdom shall not hide him.
The noble duke, my patron, comes to-night;
By his authority I will proclaim
Rewards for him that brings him to the stake,
And death for the concealer;
Then of my lands, loyal and natural boy,
I'll work the means to make thee capable. [*Exeunt, L.*]

SCENE II.—*The Gates of Gloster's Castle.*

Enter KENT, R., in disguise, and OSWALD, L.

Osw. Good dawning to thee, friend: art of the house

Kent. Ask them will answer thee.

Osw. Where may we set our horses?

Kent. I' th' mire.

Osw. I am in haste: pr'ythee, an' thou lov'st me, tell
me.

Kent. I love thee not.

Osw. Why, then, I care not for thee.

Kent. An' I had thee in Lipsbury pinfold, I'd make
thee care for me.

Osw. What dost thou mean? I know thee not.

Kent. But, minion, I know thee.

Osw. What dost thou know me for?

Kent. For a base, proud, beggarly, white-livered, glass-gazing super-serviceable, finical rogue; one that would be a pimp in way of good service, and art nothing but a composition of knave, beggar, coward, pander—

Osw. What a monstrous fellow art thou, to rail at one that is neither known of thee, nor knows thee!

Kent. Impudent slave! not know me, who but two days since tripped up thy heels before the king? Draw, miscreant, or I'll make the moon shine through thee.

[*Draws his sword.*]

Osw. What means the fellow? I tell thee, I have nothing to do with thee.

Kent. Draw, you rascal. I know your roguishness's office: you come with letters against the king, taking my young lady Vanity's part against her royal father: Draw, rascal.

Osw. Murder, murder, help!

[*Exit, Kent after him, R. S. E.*]

Flourish of Trumpets. Enter DUKE OF CORNWALL, REGAN, Captain of the Guard, Attendants, GLOSTER, and EDMUND, from the Gates, L. C.

Glos. All welcome to your graces: you do me honour
Corn. Gloster, we have heard with sorrow that your life

Has been attempted by your impious son.
But Edmund here has paid you strictest duty.

Glos. He did bewray his practice, and received
The hurt you see, striving to apprehend him.

Corn. Is he pursued?

Glos. He is, my lord.

Reg. Use our authority to apprehend
The traitor, and do justice on his head.
For you, Edmund, that have signalized
Your virtue, you from henceforth shall be ours;
Natures of such firm trust we much shall need.

Corn. Lay comfort, noble Gloster, to your breast,
As we to ours. This night be spent in revels.
We choose you, Gloster, for our host to-night,
A troublesome expression of our love

On, to the sports before us! [*Noise within, r.*] Who are these?

Enter OSWALD, R., and crosses, L., pursued by KENT, Oswald crying out for help. The Captain of the Guard stops Kent, R., and retires a little, R.

Glos. (c.) Now, what's the matter?

Corn. (c.) Keep peace, upon your lives; he dies that strikes.

Whence, and what are ye?

Reg. The messengers from our sister and the king.

Corn. Your difference? speak.

Osw. (L. c.) I'm scarce in breath, my lord.

Kent. No marvel, you have so bestirred your valour. Nature disclaims the dastard; a tailor made him.

Corn. Speak yet, how grew your quarrel?

Osw. Sir, this old ruffian here, whose life I spared in pity to his beard—

Kent. (R.) Thou essence-bottle!

n pity to my beard!—Your leave, my lord,
And I will tread the musk-cat into mortar!

Corn. Know'st thou our presence?

Kent. (R. c.) Yes, sir, but anger has a privilege.

Corn. Why art thou angry?

Kent. That such a slave as this should wear a sword,
And have no courage; office, and no honesty;
Not frost and fire hold more antipathy
Than I and such a knave!

Glos. Why dost thou call him knave?

Kent. His countenance likes me not.

Corn. No more, perhaps, does mine, nor his, or her's.

Kent. Plain dealing is my trade; and to be plain, sir,
I have seen better faces in my time,
Than stand on any shoulders now before me.

Reg. (L. c.) This is some fellow, that having once been
praised

For bluntness, affects a saucy rudeness:
But I have known one of these surly knaves,
That in his plainness harboured more design
Than twenty cringing complimenting minions.

Corn. What's the offence you gave him?

Osw. Never any, sir;

It pleased the king, his master, lately
 To strike me on a slender misconstruction;
 Whilst, watching his advantage, this old lurcher
 Tript me behind, for which the king extolled him;
 And, flushed with the honour of this bold exploit,
 Drew on me here again.

Corn. The stocks! [*Two Guards exeunt at the Gate.*]
 we'll teach you.

Kent. Sir, I am too old to learn;
 I serve the king,
 On whose employment I was sent to you:
 You'll show too small respect, and too bold malice,
 Against the person of my royal master,
 Stocking his messenger.

*Re-enter two GUARDS, with the Stocks and Seat, which they
 place R. of the Gates.*

Corn. As I have life and honour,
 There shall he sit till noon. [*Guards seize Kent.*]

Reg. Till noon, my lord! Till night, and all night, too

Kent. Why, madam, if I were your father's dog,
 You would not use me so.

Reg. Sir, being his knave, I will.

[*Captain and Guards lead Kent away, and put him
 in the Stocks.*]

Glos. Let me beseech your graces to forbear him;
 His fault is much, and the good king, his master,
 Will check him for't: but needs must take it ill
 To be thus slighted in his messenger.

Corn. We'll answer that;
 Our sister may receive it worse to have
 Her gentleman assaulted. To our business, lead.

[*Flourish.—Exeunt all but Gloster and Oswald, into
 the Castle, L.*]

Glos. I am sorry for thee, friend; 'tis the duke's plea-
 sure,
 Whose disposition will not be controlled.
 But I'll intreat for thee.

Kent. Pray do not, sir.
 I have watched and travelled hard;
 Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle:

Farewell t'ye, sir.

[*Exit Gloucester into the Castle.—Oswald remains on the Stage, mocks and insults Kent, then follows Gloucester into the Castle.*]

Good king, that must approve the common saw !
 Thou out of heaven's benediction com'st
 To the warm sun.—All weary and o'erwatched,
 I feel the drowsy guest steal on me ; take
 Advantage, heavy eyes, of this kind slumber,
 Not to behold this vile and shameful lodging. [*Sleeps*

SCENE III.—*A Forest.*

Enter EDGAR, L., muffled up.

Edg. I heard myself proclaimed,
 And, by the friendly hollow of a tree,
 Escaped the hunt. No port is free, no piace,
 Where guards and most unusual vigilance
 Do not attend to take me.—How easy now
 'Twere to defeat the malice of my trial,
 And leave my griefs on my sword's reeking point ;
 But love detains me from death's peaceful cell,
 Still whispering me, Cordelia's in distress :
 Unkind as she is, I cannot see her wretched,
 But must be near to wait upon her fortune.
 Who knows but the blest minute yet may come,
 When Edgar may do service to Cordelia ?
 That charming hope still ties me to the oar
 Of painful life, and makes me, too, submit
 To th' humblest shifts that keep life a-foot.
 My face I will besmear, and knit my locks ;
 The country gives me proof and precedent
 Of Bedlam beggars, who, with roaring voices,
 Strike in their numbed and mortified bare arms
 Pins, iron spikes, thorns, sprigs of rosemary :
 And thus from sheep-cotes, villages and mills,
 Sometimes with pray'rs, sometimes with lunatic bans,
 Enforce their charity. Poor Turlygood ! poor Tom !
 That's something yet—Edgar I am no more. | *Exit, R.*

SCENE IV.—*Before the Earl of Gloster's Castle.—KENT discovered in the Stocks.—Flourish of Trumpets, L.*

Enter KING LEAR and PHYSICIAN, L., KNIGHTS, L. S. E.

Lear. 'Tis strange, that they should so depart from home,

And not send back our messenger.

Kent. Hail, noble master!

Lear. (c.) How! mak'st thou this shame thy pastime,
What's he that has so much mistook thy place,
To set thee here?

Kent. It is both he and she, sir—your son and daughter.

Lear. No.

Kent. Yes.

Lear. No, I say.

Kent. I say, yea.

Lear. They durst not do't;

They could not, would not do't:

Resolve me with all modest haste, which way
Thou may'st deserve, or they impose this usage.

Kent. My lord, when 'at their home
I did commend your highness' letters to them,
Ere I was ris'n, arrived another post,
Stewed in his haste, breathless, and panting forth
From Goneril, his mistress, salutations;
Whose message being delivered, they took horse,
Commanding me to follow, and attend
The leisure of their answer; which I did:
But meeting here that other messenger,
Whose welcome I perceived had poisoned mine,
Being the very fellow that of late
Had shewn such rudeness to your highness; I,
Having more man than wit about me, drew;
On which he raised the house with coward cries:
This was the trespass, which your son and daughter
Thought worth the shame you see it suffer here.

Lear. Oh! this spleen swells upwards to my heart,
And heaves for passage! Down, thou climbing rage,
Thy element's below. Where is this daughter?

Enter GLOSTER, from the Castle, R., and advances.

Kent. Within, sir, at a masque.

Lear. (1.) Now, Gloster?—Ha!

[Gloster whispers Lear.

Deny to speak with me? Th'are sick, th'are weary
They've travelled hard to-night?—Mere fetches, sir;
Bring me a better answer.

Glos. My dear lord,

You know the fiery quality of the duke—

Lear. Vengeance! death! plague! confusion!

Fiery?—What quality?—Why, Gloster, Gloster—
I'd speak with the Duke of Cornwall and his wife.

Glos. I have informed them so.

Lear. Informed them? dost thou understand me, man?
I tell thee, Gloster—

Glos. Ay, my good lord.

Lear. The king would speak with Cornwall; the dear
father

Would with his daughter speak, commands her service:

Are they informed of this? My breath and blood!

Fiery? The fiery duke? Tell the hot duke—

No, but not yet; may be, he is not well;

Infirmity doth still neglect all office;

I beg his pardon, and I'll chide my rashness,

That took the indisposed and sickly fit

For the sound man.—But wherefore sits he there?

Death on my state! This act convinces me

[Pointing to the Stocks.

That this retiredness of the duke and her,

Is plain contempt.—Give me my servant forth.

Go, tell the duke and's wife I'd speak with 'em,

Now, instantly.—Bid 'em come forth and hear me;

Or at their chamber door I'll beat the drum,

'Till it cry, Sleep to death. [Going up towards Gates.

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, Page, two Soldiers, Captain of
the Guard, and Guards, from the Castle, l. c.

Oh! are you come?

Corn. (R.) Health to the king!

Reg. (R. c.) I am glad to see your highness.

Lear. (c.) Regan, I think you are: I know what cause
I have to think so. Should'st thou not be glad,
I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb,

Sepulchring an adulteress—

[Crosses to Regan.—Cornwall signs to Captain of the Guard, Captain to the two Guards—they set Kent at liberty, who goes R. of physician, behind the King

Belovéd Regan, thou wilt shake to hear
What I shall utter;—thou could'st ne'er ha' thought it;—
Thy sister's naught! Oh, Regan! she hath tied
Ingratitude, like a keen vulture, here;
I scarce can speak to thee.

Reg. I pray you, sir, take patience; I have hope
That you know less to value her desert,
Than she to slack her duty.

Lear. Ha! How's that?

Reg. I cannot think my sister in the least
Would fail in her respects; but if, perchance,
She has restrained the riots of your followers,
'Tis on such grounds, and to such wholesome ends,
As clear her from all blame.

Lear. My curses on her!

Reg. (R. C.) Oh, sir, you're old,
And should content you to be ruled and led
By some discretion that discerns your state,
Better than you yourself; therefore, good sir,
Return to our sister, and say you have wronged her.

Lear. (C.) Ha! ask her forgiveness!
Do you but mark how this becomes the house:

[Kneeling.

Dear daughter, I confess that I am old:
Age is unnecessary; on my knees I beg,
That you'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and food.

Reg. Good sir, no more of these unsightly passions;
Return back to our sister.

Lear. Never, Regan; [Rises
She hath abated me of half my train,
Looked black upon me, stabbed me with her tongue:
All the stored vengeance of heaven fall
On her ingrateful head! Strike her young bones,
Ye taking airs, with lameness!

Reg. Oh, the blest gods! thus will you wish on me,
When the rash mood—

Lear. No, Regan, thou shalt never have my curse;
Thy tender nature cannot give thee o'er

To such impiety : thou better know'st
The offices of nature, bond of childhood,
And dues of gratitude ; thou bear'st in mind
The half o' th' kingdom, which our love conierred
On thee and thine.

Reg. Good sir, to th' purpose.

Lear. Who put my man i' th' stocks ?

[*Trumpet sounds, L.*

Corn. What trumpet's that ?

Reg. I know't, my sister's ; this confirms her letters.

Enter OSWALD, L.

Sir, is your lady come ?

Lear. More torture still !

Out, varlet, from my sight !

[*Strikes Oswald, who crosses towards Kent, who threatens him—he then escapes, R. U. E., crying out.*

Corn. What means your grace ?

Lear. Who stocked my servant ? *Regan, I have hope*
Thou didst not know it. [*Trumpet sounds.*

Enter GONERIL, Page, two Ladies, Guards, and two Banners, L.

Who comes here ? Oh, heavens ! [*Crosses, R.*

If you do love old men ; if your sweet sway

Allow obedience ; if yourselves are old,

Make it your cause : send down, and take my part ! (c.)

[*To Goneril.*] Why, Gorgon, dost thou come to haunt me
here ?

Art not ashamed to look upon this beard ?

[*Regan takes Goneril by the hand.*

Darkness upon my eyes, they play me false !

Oh, Regan, wilt thou take her by the hand ?

Gon. Why not by th' hand, sir ? [*Crosses to Lear.*]

How have I offended ?

All's not offence that indiscretion finds,

And dotage terms so.

Lear. (c.) Heart, thou art too tough !

Reg. I pray you, sir, being old, confess you are so.

If, till the expiration of your month,

You will return, and sojourn with our sister,

Dismissing half your train, come then to me :

I'm now from home, and out of that provision
That shall be needful for your entertainment.

Lear. Return with her, and fifty knights dismissed?
No, rather I'll abjure all roofs, and choose
To be companion to the midnight wolf,
My naked head exposed to th' merciless air,

[*Throws down his hat, Kent takes it up*
Than have my smallest wants supplied by her.

Gon. At your choice, sir.

Lear. Now, I pry'thee, daughter, do not make me mad!
I will not trouble thee, my child; farewell;
Let shame come when it will, I do not call it;
I do not bid the thunder-bearer strike,
Nor tell tales of thee to avenging heaven.
Mend when thou canst; be better at thy leisure;
I can be patient, I can stay with Regan,
I and my hundred knights.

Reg. Your pardon, sir;
I looked not for you yet, nor am provided
For your fit welcome.

Lear. Is this well spoken, now?

Reg. My sister treats you fair. What! fifty followers?
Is it not well? What should you need of more?

Gon. Why might not you, my lord, receive attendance
From those whom she calls servants, or from mine?

Reg. Why not, my lord? If then they chance to slack
you,

We could control them. If you come to me,
For now I see the danger, I intreat you
To bring but five-and-twenty; to no more
Will I give place.

Lear. I gave you all!

Reg. And in good time you gave it.

Lear. Hold now, my temper! stand this bolt unmoved,
And I am thunder-proof! [*It begins to rain.*

Gon. (L.) Hear me, my lord.
What need you five-and-twenty, ten, or five,
To follow in a house, where twice so many
Have a command t' attend you?

Reg. (R.) What need one? [*Distant thunders.*

Lear. (C.) Heav'ns, drop your patience down!
You see me here, ye gods, a poor old man.

As full of grief as age, wretched in both!—
 If it be you that stir these daughters' hearts
 Against their father, fool me not so much
 To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger
 Oh, let not woman's weapons, water drops,
 Stain my man's cheek!—No, you unnatural hags,
 I will have such revenges on you both,
 That all the world shall—I will do such things,
 What they are, yet I know not; but they shall be
 The terrors of the earth!—[*Crosses, L.*] You think I'll
 weep:

No, I'll not weep:

I have full cause of weeping; but this heart
 Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws,

Or ere I'll weep!—

[*Rain and thunder.*]

Oh, gods, I shall go mad!

[*Exeunt King Lear, Kent, Knights, L. E., Cornwall,
 Regan, Goneril, Gloster, Oswald, and Attendants
 into the Castle, L.*]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Desert Heath.—Stage darkened.—Rain,
 Thunder, and Lightning.*

Enter LEAR and KENT, L. S. E.

Lear. (c.) Blow, wind, and crack your cheeks! rage!
 blow!

You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout

'Till you've drenched our steeples!

You sulph'rous and thought-executing fires,

'Vaunt couriers to oak-cleaving thunderbolts,

Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,
 Strike flat the thick rotundity o' the world!

Crack nature's moulds, all germins spill at once

That make ingrateful man!

Kent. (l. c.) Not all my best intreaties can persuade
 him

Into some needful shelter, or to 'bide
This poor slight covering on his agéd head,
Exposed to this wild war of earth and heav'n.

[*Thunder, lightning, and rain.*

Lear. Rumble thy fill! fight, whirlwind, rain, and fire!
Not fire, wind, rain, or thunder are my daughters:
I tax not you, ye elements, with unkindness;
I never gave you kingdoms, called you children;
You owe me no obedience.—Then let fall
Your horrible pleasure!—Here I stand your slave,
A poor, infirm, weak, and despised old man.—

[*Rain, thunder, and lightning.*

Yet I will call you servile ministers,
That have with two pernicious daughters joined
Your high engendered battle, 'gainst a head
So old and white as this! Oh! oh! 'tis foul!

Kent. Hard by, sir, is a hovel, that will lend
Some shelter from this tempest.

Lear. I will forget my nature. What, so kind a fa-
ther!—

Ay, there's the point. [*Rain, thunder, and lightning*

Kent. (c.) Consider, good my liege, things that love
night,

Love not such nights as this; these wrathful skies
Gallow the very wanderers of the dark,
And make them keep their caves: such drenching rain,
Such sheets of fire, such claps of horrid thunder,
Such groans of roaring winds, have ne'er been known!

[*Thunder very loud.*

Lear. Let the great gods,
That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,
That hast within thee undiscovered crimes!—
Hide, hide, thou murd'rer, hide thy bloody hand!—
Thou perjured villain, holy hypocrite,
That drink'st the widow's tears, sigh now, and ask
These dreadful summoners grace!—I am a man
More sinned against, than sinning. [*Crosses, R.*

Kent. Good sir, to th' hovel.

Lear. (R.) My wits begin to turn. [*Lightning.*
Come on, my boy: How dost, my boy? an cold?
I'm cold myself! Shew me this straw, my fellow:

The art of our necessity is strange,
And can make vile things precious. My poor grave,
Cold as I am at heart, I've one place there
That's sorry yet for thee.

[*Rain—Thunder—Lightning.—Exeunt, R.*]

SCENE II.—*A Room in Gloster's Castle.*

Enter EDMUND, R.

Edm. The storm is in our louder revellings drowned—
Thus would I reign, could I but mount a throne.
The riots of these proud imperial sisters,
Already have imposed the galling yoke
Of taxes and hard impositions on
The drudging peasant's neck, who bellows out
His loud complaints in vain.—Triumphant queens!
With what assurance do they tread the crowd!
Oh! for a taste of such majestic beauty,
Which none but my hot veins are fit t' engage:
Nor are my wishes desp'rate; for e'en now,
During the banquet, I observed their glances
Shot thick at me; and, as they left the room,
Each cast, by stealth, a kind inviting smile,
The happy earnest—ha!

Enter two PAGES, from opposite sides, each delivers him a letter, and exeunt, R. and L.

[*Reads.*] "*Where merit is so transparent, not to behold it were blindness, and not to reward it, ingratitude.*"

"GONERIL."

Enough! blind and ungrateful should I be,
Not to obey the summons of this cracle.
Now for the second letter.

[*Reads.*] "*If modesty be not your enemy, doubt not to find me your friend.*"

"REGAN."

Excellent Sybil! Oh, my glowing blood!
I am already sick with expectation,
And pant for the possession.—Here Gloster comes,
With business on his brow;—be hushed, my joys!

Enter GLOSTER, L.

Glos. (L.) I come to seek thee, Edmund, to impart a business of importance. I know thy loyal heart is touch'd

ed to see the cruelty of these ungrateful daughters against our royal master.

Edm. Most savage and unnatural.

Glos. Thou, Edmund, art my trusty emissary.
Haste on the spur, at the first break of day,
With these despatches to the Duke of Cambray.

[*Gives him letters*

You know what mortal feuds have always flamed
Between this Duke of Cornwall's family, and his;
Full twenty thousand hardy mountaineers
The inveterate prince will send to our assistance.
Dispatch; commend us to his grace, and prosper.

[*Exit, L*

Edm. Yes, credulous old man,
I will commend you to his grace,
His grace the Duke of Cornwall:—instantly,
I'll shew him these contents in thy own character,
And sealed with thy own signet; then forthwith
The choleric duke gives sentence on thy life,
And to my hand thy vast revenues fall,
To glut my pleasures that till now have starved.

[*Retires, R.*

GLOSTER returns, L., followed by CORDELIA and ARANTHE, poorly dressed.—Edmund observing at a distance.

Cor. (L.) Turn, Gloster, turn; by all the sacred power
I do conjure you, give my griefs a hearing: [*Kneels.*
You must, you shall,—nay, I am sure you will;
For you were always styled the just and good.

Glos. (c.) What would'st thou, princess? Rise, and
speak thy griefs.

Cor. Nay, you shall promise to redress 'em, too,
Or here I kneel forever. I entreat
Thy succour for a father, and a king—
An injured father, and an injured king.

Edm. (R.) [*Aside.*] Oh, charming sorrow! How her
tears adorn her!

Glos. Consider, princess, [*Raises her.*
For whom thou begg'st—'tis for the king that wronged
thee.

Cor. Oh, name not that! he did not, could not wrong
me!

Nay, muse not, Gloster ; for it is too li tely
The injured king ere this is past you r aid,
And gone distracted with his savage wrongs.

Edm. [*Aside.*] I'll gaze no more ;—and yet my eyes are
charmed !

Cor. Or, what if it be worse ?—Can there be worse ?
Ah, 'tis too probable, this furious night
Has pierced his tender body ; the bleak winds
And cold rain chilled, or lightning struck him dead ;
If it be so, your promise is discharged,
And I have only one poor boon to beg,—
That you convey me to his breathless trunk,
With my torn robes to wrap his hoary head,
With my torn hair to bind his hands and feet ;
Then with a shower of tears
To wash his clay-smear'd cheeks, and die beside him.

Glos. Oh, fair Cordelia, thou hast piety
Enough t' atone for both thy sister's crimes ;
I have already plotted to restore
My injured master ; and thy virtue tells me
We shall succeed, and suddenly.

[*Exit, R.*

Cor. Dispatch, Aranthe ;
For in this disguise we'll instantly
Go seek the king, and bring him some relief. [*Crosses, L.*

Aran. How, madam ! are you ignorant
That your most impious sisters have decreed
Immediate death for any that relieve him ?

Cor. I cannot dread the furies in this cause !

Aran. In such a night as this ? Consider, madam,
For many miles about there's scarce a bush
To shelter in.

Cor. Therefore no shelter for the king,
And more our charity to find him out.
What have not women dared for vicious love ?
And we'll be shining proofs that they can dare
For piety as much.

[*Thunder*

1 Blow, winds, and lightnings fall ;
1 Bold in my virgin innocence, I'll fly
4 My royal father to relieve, or die.

[*Exeunt Cordelia and Aranthe, L.*

Edm. " In this disguise, we'll instantly
Go seek the king !"---Ha ! ha ! a lucky change

That virtue, which I feared would be my hindrance,
 Has proved the bawd to my design.
 I'll bribe two ruffians, shall at distance follow,
 And seize them in some desert place; and there,
 Whilst one retains her, t' other shall return
 T' inform me where she's lodged. I'll be disguised, too.
 Whilst they are poaching for me, I'll to the duke
 With these dispatches; then to the field,
 Where, like the vig'rous Jove, I will enjoy
 This Semele in a storm; 'twill deaf her cries,
 Like drums in battle, lest her groans should pierce
 My pitying ear, and make the am'rous fight less fierce.
 [Exit, L.]

SCENE III.—*Another Part of the Heath.—Rain—Thunder—Lightning.—Lamps down.*

Enter KING LEAR and KENT, L.

Kent. Here is the place, my lord; good my lord, enter:
 The tyranny of this open night's too rough
 For nature to endure. [Storm increases.]

Lear. Let me alone.

Kent. Good my lord, enter.

Lear. Wilt break my heart?

Kent. I'd rather break my own.

Lear. Thou think'st 'tis much that this contentious
 storm

Invades us to the skin; so 'tis to thee;
 But where the greater malady is fixed,
 The lesser is scarce felt. The tempest in my mind
 Doth from my senses take all feeling else,
 Save what beats there. Filial ingratitude!
 Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand
 For lifting food to't?—But I'll punish home!
 No, I will weep no more. [Rain—Thunder—Lightning]
 In such a night
 To shut me out!—Pour on, I will endure—
 In such a night as this! Oh, Regan, Goneril!
 Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all—
 Oh, that way madness lies! let me shun that—
 No more of that. [Crosses, L.]

Kent. See, my lord, here's the entrance.

Lear. Well, I'll go in.

And pass it all: I'll pray, and then I'll sleep. [*Thunder*
 Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
 That 'bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
 How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides
 Sustain this shock—your raggedness defend you
 From seasons such as these? Oh, I have ta'en
 Too little care of this. Take physic, pomp;
 Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
 That thou may'st cast the superflux to them,
 And show the heav'ns more just!

Edgar. [*In the Hovel, R. U. E., throwing out Straw.*]
 Five fathom and a half.—Poor Tom!

Kent. (c.) What art thou, that dost grumble there i' th'
 straw? Come forth!

*Enter EDGAR, disguised, from the Hovel, R. U. E.—He ad-
 vances, R.*

Edg. Away! the foul fiend follows me—Through the
 sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind—Mum, go to thy bed,
 and warm thee.—[*Aside.*] Ha! what do I see?
 By all my griefs, the poor old king bare-headed,
 And drenched in this foul storm! Professing Syrens,
 Are all your protestations come to this?

Lear. (L.) Tell me, fellow, did'st thou give all to thy
 two daughters? [*Crosses to Edgar, R.*

Edg. (R. c.) Who gives anything to poor Tom, whom
 the foul fiend has led through fire and through flame,
 through bushes and bogs; that has laid knives under his
 pillow, and halters in his pew: that has made him proud
 of heart to ride on a bay trotting horse over four-inched
 bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor? Bless
 thy five wits! Tom's a-cold. Bless thee from whirlwinds,
 star-blasting, and taking! Do poor Tom some charity,
 whom the foul fiend vexes. Sa, sa; there, I could have
 him now, and there, and there again.

[*Strikes with his Staff.*

Lear. (R. c.) What, have his daughters brought him to
 this pass! Could'st thou save nothing? Didst thou give
 them all?

Kent. (L. c.) He has no daughter, sir.

Lear. Death, traitor! nothing could have so blued na-
 ture

To such a lowness, but his unkind daughters.

Edg. Pillicock sat upon pillicock hill; hallo, hallo, hallo!

Lear. Is it the fashion that discarded fathers
Should have such little mercy on their flesh?
Judicious punishment! 'Twas this flesh begot
Those pelican daughters.

Edg. Take heed of the foul fiend; obey thy parents
keep thy word justly; swear not; commit not with man's
sworn spouse; set not thy sweet heart on proud array
[*Wind and rain.*] Tom's a-cold.

Lear. What hast thou been?

Edg. A serving-man, proud of heart; that curled my
hair; used perfume and washes; that served the lust of
my mistress's heart, and did the act of darkness with her,
swore as many oaths as I spoke words; and broke them
all in the sweet face of heaven. Let not the paint, nor the
patch, nor the rustling of silks, betray thy poor heart to
woman; keep thy foot out of brothels, thy hand out of
plackets, thy pen from creditors' books, and defy the foul
fiend! [*Wind.*] Still through the hawthorn blows the cold
wind. Ha, no nonny, dolphin my boy, my boy, sessa;
let him trot by.

Lear. Death! thou wert better in thy grave, than thus
to answer with thy uncovered body this extremity of the
sky. Yet consider him well, and man's no more than this;
thou art indebted to the worm for no silk, to the beast for
no hide, to the cat for no perfume. Ha! here's two of us
are sophisticated: thou art the thing itself; unaccommodated
man is no more than such a poor, bare, forked animal
as thou art.

Off, off, ye vain disguises, empty lendings, [*Tares his clothe*
i'll be my original self; quick, quick, uncase me.

Kent. Defend his wits, good heaven!

Lear. One point I had forgot: what is your name?

Edg. Poor Tom, that eats the swimming frog, the wall
newt and the water-newt; that in the fury of his heart,
when the foul fiend rages, eats cow-dung for salads, swal-
lows the old rat and the ditch-dog; that drinks the green
mantle of the standing pool; that's whipped from tything
to tything; that has three suits to his back; six shirts to
his body;

Horse to ride, and weapon to wear;
 But rats and mice, and such small deer,
 Have been Tom's food for seven long year.

Beware my followers; peace, Smolkin, peace, thou foul fiend!

Lear. One word more, but be sure true counsel:—tell me, is a madman a gentleman, or a yeoman?

Kent. [*Aside.*] I feared 'twould come to this: his wits are gone.

Edg. Frateretto calls me, and tells me, Nero is an angler in the lake of darkness. Pray innocent, and beware the foul fiend!

Lear. Right, ha, ha!—was it not pleasant to have a thousand with red-hot spits come hissing in upon them?

Edg. [*Aside.*] My tears begin to take his part so much, they mar my counterfeiting.

Lear. The little dogs and all, Tray, Blanch, and Sweetheart, see, they bark at me.

Edg. Tom will throw his head at 'em: 'vaunt, ye curs!

Be thy mouth or black or white,
 Tooth that poisons, if it bite:
 Mastiff, greyhound, mongrel grim,
 Hound or spaniel, brache or lym,
 Bob-tail tike, or trundle tail,
 Tom will make 'em weep and wail;
 For with throwing thus my head,
 Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.

See, see, see! [*Throws his straw head-dress at them.*]

Come, march to wakes, and fairs, and market towns.

Poor Tom, thy horn is dry. [*Crosses, L.*]

Lear. You, sir, I entertain you for one of my hundred; only I do not like the fashion of your garments; you'll say they're Persian; but no matter, let 'em be changed.

Edg. This is the foul fiend Flibberigibbet; he begins a curfew, and walks till the first cock: he gives the web, and the pin; knits the elflock; squints the eye, and makes the hair lip; mildews the white wheat, and hurts the poor creatures of the earth.

Saint Withold footed thrice the wold;
 He met the night-mare and her nine fold
 'Twas there he did appoint her;
 He oid her alight, and her troth plight,
 And aroint the witch, aroint her.

Enter GLOSTER and two Servants with Torches, 1.

Glos. What, has your grace no better company ?

Edg. The prince of darkness is a gentleman ; *Moëd* he is called, and *Mahu*.

Glos. [*To Lear.*] Go with me, sir ; hard by I have a tenant. My duty cannot suffer me to obey in all your daughters' hard commands ; though their injunctions be to bar my doors, and let this tyrannous night take hold upon you, yet I have ventured to come seek you out, and bring you where both fire and food are ready. •

Kent. Good my lord, take this offer.

Lear. First, let me talk with this philosopher.

[*Lear and Edgar sit on the ground.*]

Say, *Stagyrite*, what is the cause of thunder ?

Glos. (R.) Beseech you, sir, go with me.

Lear. (C.) I'll talk a word with this same learned *Theban*.

What is your study ?

Edg. (L. C.) How to prevent the fiend, and to kill vermin.

Lear. Let me ask you a word in private.

[*Whispers Edgar.*]

Kent. (R. C.) [*To Glos.*] His wits are quite unsettled ; good sir, let's force him hence.

Glos. [*To Kent.*] Can'st blame him ? His daughters seek his death,

This bedlam but disturbs him the more : fellow, begone.

[*Edgar rises*]

Edg. Child *Rowland* to the dark tower came,

His word was still *fie, fo, and fum,* [*Crosses, R.*]

I smell the blood of a British man.—[*Aside.*] Oh, torture !

[*Exit, R. U. E., into the Houcl.*]

Glos. Now, I p'rythee, friend, let's take him in our arms :

There is a litter ready ; lay him in't,

And drive toward *Dover*, friend, where thou shalt meet

Both welcome and protection.

Good sir, along with us.

Lear. You say right ; let 'em anatomize *Regan*, see what breeds about her heart. Is there any cause in nature for these hard hearts ?

Kent. I beseech your grace— [They raise him.

Lear. Hist!—make no noise, make no noise;—draw the curtains; closer, closer;—so, so, so—we'll go to supper i' the morning—so, so, so.

[Falls asleep, and is carried off by Gloster and Kent
R.—Thunder and Lightning.

Enter CORDELIA and ARANTHE, L. U. E.

Aran. Dear madam, rest you here, our search is vain, Look, here's a shed; beseech you, enter here.

Cor. Pr'ythee, go in thyself, seek thy own ease; Where the mind's free, the body's delicate; This tempest but diverts me from the thought Of what would hurt me more.

Enter two RUFFIANS, L. U. E.

1st Ruff. We've dogged them far enough; this place is private; I'll keep 'em prisoners here within this hovel, whilst you return and bring Lord Edmund hither: but help me first to house 'em.—Now, dispatch.

[They seize Cordelia and Aranthe.

Cor. Help!—murder!—help!—Gods, some kind thunderbolt

To strike me dead!

Aran. Help! help!

Enter EDGAR from the Hovel, R. U. E.

Edg. What cry was that?—Ha! women seized by ruffians!

Is this a place and time for villainy?

Avaunt, ye bloodhounds!

[Drives them off with his quarter-staff, L.

Oh, speak, what are ye, that appear to be

O' the tender sex, and yet unguarded wander

Through the dead mazes of this dreadful night,

Where, though at full, the clouded moon scarce darts

Imperfect glimmerings?

Cor. First, say, what art thou?

Our Guardian Angel, that wert pleased to assume

That horrid shape to fright the ravishers?

We'll kneel to thee.

[Kneels

Edg. [Aside.] Oh, my tumultuous blood!

By all my trembling veins, Cordelia's voice!
'Tis she herself!—My senses, sure, conform
To my wild garb, and I am mad indeed!

Cor. Whate'er thou art, befriend a wretched virgin,
And if thou can'st, direct our weary search.

Edg. Who relieves poor Tom, that sleeps on the nettle,
with the hedge-pig for his pillow?

Whilst Snaug plyed the bellows,
She trucked with her fellows;

The freckle-faced Mab

Was a blouze and a drab,

Yet Swithen made Oberon jealous.—[*Aside.*] Oh,
torture!

Aran. Alack! madam, a poor wand'ring lunatic.

Cor. And yet his language seemed but now well-tem-
pered.

Speak, friend, to one more wretched than thyself;

And if thou hast one interval of sense,

Inform us, if thou canst, where we may find

A poor old man, who through this heath hath strayed

The tedious night.—Speak—saw'st thou such a one?

Edg. [*Aside.*] The king, her father, whom she's come
to seek

Through all the terrors of this night! Oh, gods!

That such amazing piety, such tenderness,

Should yet to me be cruel!—

Yes, fair one, such a one was lately here,

And is conveyed by some that came to seek him

To a neighbouring cottage; but distinctly where,

I know not.

Cor. Blessings on them!

[*Crosses, R.*]

Let's find him out, Aranthe; for thou see'st

We are in heaven's protection.

[*Going off, R.*]

Edg. (c.) Oh, Cordelia!

Cor. Ha! thou know'st my name.

Edg. As you did once know Edgar's.

Cor. Edgar!

Edg. The poor remains of Edgar, what
Your scorn has left him.

Cor. Do we wake, Aranthe?

Edg. My father seeks my life, which I preserved,
In hope of some blest minute to oblige

Distressed Cordelia, and the gods have given it!
 That thought alone prevailed with me to take
 This frantic dress, to make the earth my bed,
 With these bare limbs all change of seasons' bide,
 Noon's scorching heat, and midnight's piercing cold,
 To feed on offals, and to drink with herds,
 To combat with the winds, and be the sport
 Of clowns, or, what's more wretched yet, their pity.

Cor. Was ever tale so full of misery!

Edg. But such a fall as this, I grant, was due
 To my aspiring love; for 'twas presumptuous,
 Though not presumptuously pursued;
 For, well you know, I wore my flame concealed,
 And silent, as the lamps that burn in tombs;
 Till you perceived my grief, with modest grace
 Drew forth the secret, and then sealed my pardon.

Cor. You had your pardon, nor can challenge more.

Edg. What do I challenge more?

Such vanity agrees not with these rags:
 When in my prosperous state, rich Gloster's heir,
 You silenced my pretences, and enjoined me
 To trouble you upon that theme no more;
 Then what reception must love's language find
 From these bare limbs, and beggar's humble weeds?

Cor. Such as the voice of pardon to a wretch condemned
 Such as the shouts
 Of succouring forces to a town besieged.

Edg. Ah! what new method now of cruelty?

Cor. Come to my arms, thou dearest, best of men,
 And take the kindest vows that e'er were spoke
 By a protesting maid.

Edg. Is't possible!

Cor. By the dear vital stream that bathes my heart,
 These halloved rags of thine, and naked virtue,
 These abject tassels, these fantastic shreds,
 To me are dearer than the richest pomp
 Of purpled monarchs.

Edg. Generous, charming maid! [They embrace

Cor. Cold and weary,
 We'll rest awhile, Aranthe, on that straw,
 Then forward to find out the poor old king.

Exit Aranthe into the hovel, R. U. E.

Edg. Look, I have flint and steel, the implements
Of wand'ring lunatics; I'll strike a light,
And make a fire beneath this shed, to dry
Thy storm-drenched garments, ere thou lie to rest thee
Then, fierce and wakeful as th' Hesperian dragon,
I'll watch beside thee to protect thy sleep:
Meanwhile the stars shall dart their kindest beams,
And angels visit my Cordelia's dreams.

[*Exeunt into the hovel, R. U. E*

END OF ACT III.

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ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Earl of Gloster's Castle.*

*Enter DUKE OF CORNWALL, a letter in his hand, REGAN,
EDMUND, EDWARD, and Servants, R., Officer and four
Guards, R. S. E.*

Corn. (R.) I will have my revenge, ere I depart his
house!

Regan, see here: a plot upon our state;

[*Gives her a letter*

'Tis Gloster's character, who has betrayed
His double trust, of subject and of host.

Reg. Then double be our vengeance; this confirms
Th' intelligence that we but now received,
That he has been this night to seek the king.—
But who, sir, was the kind discoverer?

Corn. Our eagle, quick to spy, and fierce to seize,
Our trusty Edmund.

Reg. 'Twas a noble service;
Oh, Cornwall, take him to thy deepest trust,
And wear him as a jewel at thy heart.

Edm. Think, sir, how hard a fortune I sustain,
That makes me thus repent of serving you.
Oh, that this treason had not been, or I
Not the discoverer!

Corn. Edmund, thou shalt find
A father in our love, and from this minute

We call thee Earl of Gloster ; but here yet
Remains another justice to be done—
And that's to punish the discarded traitor.
But, lest thy tender nature should relent
At his just sufferings, nor brook the sight,
We wish thee to withdraw.

(c.) Bring in the traitor ! [Exit Edmund, R.]

Enter GLOSTER, brought in by two Servants, L.

Bind fast his arms.

Glos. (L.) What mean your graces ?

You are my guests ; pray, do me no foul play.

Corn. Bind him, [*They bind them.*] I say, hard, harder
yet.

Reg. (L. c.) Now, traitor, thou shalt find—

[*Crosses half way up the Stage*]

Corn. Speak, rebel, where hast thou sent the king,
Whom, spite of our decree, thou saved'st last night ?

Glos. I'm tied to th' stake, and I must stand the course

Reg. Say where, and why, thou hast concealed him
traitor. [*Comes down to Gloster*]

Glos. Because I would not see thy cruel hands
Tear out his poor old eyes, nor thy fierce sister
Carve his anointed flesh ; but I shall see
The swift-winged vengeance overtake such children.

Corn. See'st thou shalt never : slaves, perform your
work ; [*Servants take Gloster out, L.*]
Out with those treacherous eyes ; dispatch, I say.

Glos. [*Without, L.*] He that will think to live 'till he be
old—

Give me some help.—Oh, cruel ! oh, ye gods !

Edw. (R. c.) Hold, hold, my lord, I bar your cruelty ;
I cannot love your safety, and give way
To such inhuman practice.

Corn. Ah, my villain !

Edw. I have been your servant from my infancy ;
But better service have I never done you,
Than with this boldness.

Corn. Take thy death, slave.

[*Stabs Edward, and puts up his dagger.*]

Edw. Nay, then, revenge, whilst yet my blood is warm !
[*Draws his sword, runs Cornwall through the body, and*

is carried off by Guard, R.—Cornwall is supported by Servants.

Reg. Help here—are you not hurt, my lord?

Glos. [Without, L.] Edmund, enkindle all the sparks of nature

To quit this horrid act.

Reg. Out, treacherous villain,
Thou call'st on him that hates thee; it was he
That broached thy treason, showed us thy dispatches;
There—read, and save the Cambrian prince a labour.

[Throws the letters out to him, L.]

Glos. [Without, L.] Oh, my folly!

Then Edgar was abused! kind gods, forgive me that!

Reg. [To Corn.] How is't, my lord?

Corn. Turn out that eyeless villain, let him smell
His way to Cambray;

Regan, I bleed apace; give me your arm.

[*Exeunt, Regan, L., Cornwall, supported by his Servants, R.*]

SCENE II.—The Open Country.

Enter EDGAR, in disguise, R.

Edg. The lowest and most abject thing of fortune
Stands still in hope, and is secure from fear.

The lamentable change is from the best,
The worst returns to better.—Who comes here?

[Retires half way up the Stage]

My father poorly led! deprived of sight!
The precious stones torn from their bleeding rings!
World! world! world!

But that thy strange mutations make us hate thee,
Life would not yield to age.

Enter GLOSTER, led by an OLD MAN, L.

Old. Oh, my good lord, I have been your tenant,
And your father's tenant, these fourscore years.

Glos. Away, get thee away; good friend, begone;
Thy comforts can do me no good at all;
Thee they may hurt.

Old M. You cannot see your way.

Glos. I have no way, and therefore want no eyes,

I stumbled when I saw.—Oh, dear son Edgar!
The food of thy abuséd father's wrath,
Might I but live to see thee in my touch,
I'd say I had eyes again.

Edg. [*Aside.*] Alas! he's sensible that I was wronged
And, should I own myself, his tender heart
Would break betwixt the extremes of grief and joy.

Old M. How now? who's there?

Edg. [*Advances R. of Glos.*] A charity for poor Tom.—
I'lay fair, and defy the foul fiend.

[*Aside.*] Oh, gods! and must I still pursue this trade,
Trifling beneath such loads of misery?

Old M. (R. C.) 'Tis poor mad Tom.

Glos. (R. C.) In the late storm I such a fellow saw,
Which made me think a man a worm.
Where is the lunatic?

Old M. Here, my lord.

Glos. Get thee now away; if, for my sake,
Thou wilt o'ertake us hence a mile or two
I' th' way to Dover, do 't for ancient love,
And bring some cov'ring for this naked wretch,
Whom I'll intreat to lead me.

Old M. Alack, my lord, he's mad.

Glos. 'Tis the time's plague, when madmen lead the
blind.

Do as I bid thee.

Old M. I'll bring him the best 'parel that I have,
Come on't what will. [*Exit, L.*]

Glos. Sirrah! naked fellow!

Edg. (R.) Poor Tom's a-cold.—[*Aside.*] I cannot fool it
longer,

And yet I must.—Bless thy sweet eyes, they bleed;
Believ't, poor Tom e'en weeps his blind to see 'em.

Glos. Know'st thou the way to Dover?

Edg. Both stile and gate, horse-way and foot-path.
Poor Tom has been scared out of his good wits.
Bless every true man's son from the foul fiend!

Glos. Here, take this purse; that I am wretched
Makes thee the happier. Heav'n deal so still!
Thus let the griping usurer's hoard be scattered,
So distribution shall undo excess,
And each man have enough. Dost thou know Dover?

Edg. Ay, master.

Glos. There is a cliff, whose high and berding head
Looks dreadfully down upon the roaring deep;
Bring me but to the very brink of it,
And I'll repair the poverty thou bear'st
With something rich about me.—From that place
I shall no leading need.

Edg. Give me thy arm; poor Tom shall guide thee.

Glos. Soft! for I hear the tread of passengers.

Enter KENT, in his own character, and CORDELIA, L.

Cor. (L.) Ah, me! your fear's too true, it was the king
I spoke but even now with some that met him,
As mad as the vexed sea, singing aloud;
Crowned with rank fumiter, and furrow weeds,
With berries, burdocks, violets, daisies, poppies,
And all the idle flowers that grow
In our sustaining corn: conduct me to him,
To prove my last endeavours to restore him,
And heaven so prosper thee!

Kent. (c.) I will, good lady.

Ha! Gloster here!—Turn, poor dark man, and hear
A friend's condolment, who, at sight of thine,
Forgets his own distress: thy old true Kent.

Glos. How! Kent? From whence returned?

Kent. I have not, since my banishment, been absent,
But in disguise followed the abandoned king.
Twas me thou saw'st with him in the late storm.

Glos. Let me embrace thee; had I eyes, I now
Should weep for joy; but let this trickling blood
Suffice instead of tears.

Cor. (L. c.) Oh, misery! [Sees Gloster.]
To whom shall I complain, or in what language?
Forgive, oh, wretched man, the piety
That brought thee to this pass; 'twas I that caused it;
I cast me at thy feet, and beg of thee [Kneels.]
To crush these weeping eyes to equal darkness,
If that will give thee any recompense.

Edg. [*Aside.*] Was ever season so distressed as this?

Glos. I think, Cordelia's voice; rise, pious princess,
And take a dark man's blessing.

[*Cordelia rises.—Kent and Gloster retire up and confer.*

Cor. Oh, my Edgar,
My virtue's now grown guilty, works the bane
Of those that do befriend me; heaven forsakes me;
And when you look that way, it is but just
That you should hate me, too.

Edg. Oh, waive this cutting speech, and spare to wound
A heart that's on the rack.

[*Retire up.—Gloster and Kent come down, L.*]

Glos. (L.) No longer cloud thee, Kent, in that disguise;
There's business for thee, and of noblest weight;
Our injured country is at length in arms,
Urged by the king's inhuman wrongs and mine,
And only want a chief to lead them on:—
That task be thine.

Edg. [*Aside.*] Brave Britons! then there's life in't yet!

[*Comes down, L.*]

Kent. (R. C.) Then have we one cast for our fortune
still.

Come, princess, I'll bestow you with the king,
Then on the spur to head these forces.
Farewell, good Gloster: to our conduct trust.

Glos. And be your cause as prosp'rous as 'tis just.

[*Exeunt Kent and Cordelia, R., Edgar and Gloster, L.*]

SCENE III.—*Albany's Palace.*

Enter GONERIL, with a letter, and OSWALD, L.

Gon. (L. C.) It was great ignorance, Gloster's eyes be-
ing out,
To let him live; where he arrives, he moves
All hearts against us. Edmund, I think, is gone,
In pity to his misery, to dispatch him.

Osw. (L.) No, madam; he's returned on speedy sum-
mons

Back to your sister.

Gon. Ah! I like not that!

Such speed must have the wings of love. Where's Al-
bany?

Osw. Madam, within; but never man so chang'd:
I told him of the uproar of the peasants—
He smiled at it; when I inform'd him
Of Gloster's treason—

Gon Trouble him no further;
It is his coward spirit. Back to our sister:
Hasten her musters on, and let her know
I have given the distaff into my husband's hands;
That done, with special care deliver these dispatches,
In private, to young Gloster.

Enter CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD, R.

Cap (R.) Oh, madam, most unseasonable news!
The Duke of Cornwall's dead of his late wound,
Whose loss your sister has in part supplied,
Making brave Edmund general of her forces.

Gon. [*Aside.*] One way, I like this well;
But, being a widow, and my Gloster with her,
'T may blast the promised harvest of our love.
A word more, sir: [*To Oswald.*] add speed to your journey;

And if you chance to meet with that blind traitor,
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off.

[*Exeunt, Goneril and Captain, R., Oswald, L.*

SCENE IV.—*Another Part of the Country.*

Enter GLOSTER, and EDGAR as a Peasant, L. U. E.

Glos. When shall we come to th' top of that same hill?

Edg. We climb it now; mark, how we labour.

Glos. Methinks, the ground is even.

Edg. Horribly steep. Hark, do you hear the sea?

Glos. No, truly.

Edg. Why, then your other senses grow imperfect,
By your eyes' anguish.

Glos. So it may be, indeed.

Methinks, thy voice is altered, and thou speak'st
In better phrase and matter than thou didst.

Edg. You are much deceived; in nothing am I altered
But my garments.

Glos. Methinks, you're better spoken.

Edg. Come on, sir; [*Crosses to R.*] here's the place.
How fearful

And dizzy 'tis, to cast one's eyes so low!

The crows and choughs, that wing the midway air

Shew scarce so big as beetles; half way down
Hangs one that gathers samphire—dreadful trade!
The fishermen that walk upon the beach,
Appear like mice; and yon tall anch'ring bark
Seems lessened to her cock; her cock, a buoy
Almost too small for sight; the murm'ring surge
Cannot be heard so high. I'll look no more;
Lest my brain turn, and the disorder make me
Tumble down headlong.

Glos. Set me where you stand.

Edg. [*Puts him across to R.*] You are now within
of th' extreme verge:

For all beneath the moon I would not now
Leap forward.

Glos. (R.) Let go my hand.

Here is another purse, in it a jewel
Well worth a poor man's taking. Get thee farther,
Bid me farewell, and let me hear thee going.

Edg. Fare you well, sir. [*Retires a little, R.*] That I do
trifle thus

With his despair, is with design to cure it. [*Aside.*]

Glos. [*Kneels.*] Thus, mighty gods, this world I do re-
nounce,

And in your sight shake my afflictions off;
If I could bear them longer, and not fall
To quarrel with your great opposeless wills,
My snuff and feebler part of nature should
Burn itself out. If Edgar live, oh, bless him!
Now, fellow, fare thee well.

[*Prepares to fall, when Edgar advances and catches
him.*]

Edg. Hold!—who comes here?

*Enter KING LEAR, with a Coronet of Flowers on his head
and Straw in his hand, L. U. E.*

Lear. No, no; they cannot touch me for coining;
I am the king himself.

Edg. Oh, piercing sight!

Lear. Nature's above art in that respect. There's your
press-money. That fellow handles his bow like a crow-
keeper;—draw me a clothier's yard. A mouse, a mouse!
Peace, hoa! There's my gauntlet; I'll prove it on a

giant. Bring up the brown bills; well flown, barb; I' th' white; i' th' white;—Hewgh! give the word.

Edg. Sweet Marjoram.

Lear. Pass.

[*Edgar crosses, L.*

Glos. I know that voice.

Lear. Ha! Goneril! With a white beard? They flattered me like a dog, and told me I had white hairs on my chin, before the black ones were there. (R.) To say ay and no to everything that I said. Ay, and no, too, was no good divinity. When the rain came once to wet me, and the winds to make me chatter,—when the thunder would not peace at my bidding, there I found 'em, there I smelt them out. Go to, they are not men of their words; they told me I was everything; 'tis a lie; I am not ague-proof. (L.)

Glos. That voice I well remember: is't not the king?

Lear. Ay, every inch a king! When I do stare, See how the subject quakes!

I pardon that man's life. What was the cause? Adultery?

Thou shalt not die. Die for adultery? No! The wren goes to't, and the small gilded fly Engenders in my sight. (R.) Let copulation thrive; For Gloster's bastard son was kinder to his father, Than were my daughters, got i' th' lawful bed. To't, luxury, pell mell: for I lack soldiers.—

There's money for thee.

Glos. (R. c.) Let me kiss that hand.

Lear. Let me wipe it first; it smells of mortality.

Glos. Speak, sir: do you know me?

Lear. I remember thine eyes well enough. Nay, did thy worst, blind Cupid, I'll not love.—Read me this challenge: mark but the penning of it.

Glos. Were all the letters suns, I could not see.

Lear. Read, read, read.

Glos. What, with this case of eyes?

Lear. Oh, ho! are you there with me? No eyes in your head, nor no money in your purse? Yet you see how this world goes.

Glos. I see it feelingly.

Lear. What, art mad? A man may see how this world goes, with no eyes. Look with thy ears: see how you

justice rails on yon simple thief. Hark in thine ear: shake 'em together, and the first that drops, be it thief or justice, is a villain.—Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?

Glos. Ay, sir.

Lear. (c.) And the man run from the cur; there thou might'st behold the great image of authority; a dog's obeyed in office. Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand! Why dost thou lash that strumpet? Thou hotly lust'st to enjoy her in that kind for which thou whip'st her; do, do! the judge that sentenced her has been beforehand with thee.

Glos. How stiff is my vile sense that yields not yet!

Lear. I tell thee, the usurer hangs the cozener. Through tattered clothes small vices do appear; Robes and fur gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold, And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks: Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw doth pierce it.—Why, there 'tis for thee, friend—make much of it; It has the power to seal the accuser's lips. Get thee glass eyes, and, like a scurvy politician, seem to see the things thou dost not. Pull, pull—off my boots; hard, harder; so, so.

Glos. Oh, matter and impertinency mixed!
Reason in madness!

Lear. If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes. I know thee well enough—thy name is Gloster. Thou must be patient; we came crying hither; Thou know'st, the first time that we taste the air, We wail and cry. I'll preach to thee: mark me.

Edg. Break, lab'ring heart!

Lear. When we are born, we cry that we are come
To this great stage of fools.

Enter PHYSICIAN *and* two KNIGHTS, R. U. E.

Phys. (R.) Oh! here he is; lay hand upon him--sir,
Your dearest daughter sends—

Lear. No rescue? What, a prisoner? I am even the natural fool of fortune. Use me well, you shall have ransom.—Let me have surgeons. Oh! I am cut to the brains.

Phys. You shall have anything.

Lear. No seconds? All myself?

I will die bravely, like a bridegroom. What!

I will be jovial; come, come; I am a king,

My masters, know you that?

[*Crosses, R.*

Phys. You are a royal one, and we obey you.

Lear. It were an excellent stratagem to shoe a troop of horse with felt; I'll put it in proof.—No noise, no noise. Now will we steal upon these sons-in-law, and then—Kill kill, kill, kill! [*Exeunt King Lear and Physician, R.*

Edg. A sight most moving in the meanest wretch,
Past speaking in a king.

Glos. (R.) Now, good sir, what are you?

Edg. (C.) A most poor man, made tame to fortune's strokes,

And prone to pity by experienced sorrows.

Give me your hand.

Glos. You gentle gods, take my breath from me,
And let not my ill-genius tempt me more
To die before you please.

Enter OSWALD, L.

Osw. (L.) A proclaimed prize! Oh, most happily met!
That eyeless head of thine was first framed flesh
To raise my fortunes. Thou old unhappy traitor,
The sword is out that must destroy thee.

[*Draws his sword.*

Glos. Now let thy friendly hand put strength enough
to't. [*Edgar raises his staff.*

Osw. Wherefore, bold peasant,
Dar'st thou support a published traitor? Hence,
Lest I destroy thee, too; let go his arm.

Edg. Chill not let go, zir, without 'vurther 'casion.

Osw. (L. C.) Let go, slave; or thou diest.

Edg. (L. C.) Good gentleman, go your gait, and let poor
volk pass; and chu'd ha' bin zwaggered out of my life,
it would not have been zo long as 'tis by a vortnight.—
Nay, an' thou com'st near th' old man, I'st try whether
your costard or my ballow be th' harder.

Osw. Out, dunghill!

Edg. Chill pick your teeth, sir: come, no matter for
your foines. [*Knocks him down.*

Osw. Slave, thou hast slain me! oh, untimely death!

[*Dies*

Edg. I know thee well, a serviceable villain;
As duteous to the vices of thy mistress,
As lust could wish.

Glos. (c.) What? Is he dead?

Edg. This is a letter-carrier, and may have
Some papers of intelligence, that may stand
Our party in good stead to know.—What's here?

[*Takes a letter out of his pocket and reads it.*

“*To Edmund; Earl of Gloster.*

[*Reads.*]—“Let our mutual loves be remembered: you
have many opportunities to cut Albany off. If he return
the conquerer, then I am still a prisoner, and his bed my
jail; from the loathed warmth of which deliver me, and
supply the place for your labour. “*GONERIL.*”

[*Aside.*] A plot upon the duke her husband's life,
And the exchange my brother!—

In time and place convenient I'll produce
This letter to the sight of th' injured duke,
As best shall serve our purpose.

[*Music, L.*

Come, your hand;

Far off, methinks, I hear the beaten drum;

Come, sir, I will bestow you with a friend. [*Exeunt, L.*

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber.*—KING LEAR *asleep on a couch, R.*

CORDELIA, R., *seated*, PHYSICIAN, and two KNIGHTS *standing by him.*

Cor. All blessed secrets;

All you unpublished virtues of the earth,
Spring with my tears—be aidant and remediate,
In the good man's distress—

Oh, you kind heavens,

Cure this great breach in his abused nature;

Th' untuned and jarring senses, oh, wind up,

Of this child changed father.

Phys. (L.) We have employed the utmost pow'r of art
And this deep rest will perfect our design.

Cor. Oh, Regan! Goneril! Inhuman sisters!
Had he not been your father, these white hairs
Had challenged, sure, some pity! Was this a face
To be exposed against the jarring winds?
My enemy's dog, though he had bit me, should
Have stood that night against my fire.

Phys. Be by, good madam, when we do awake him;
I doubt not of his temperance.

Cor. Oh, my dear father! Restoration, hang
Thy med'cine on my lips; and let this kiss
Repair those violent harms, that my two sisters
Have in thy rev'rence made. He wakes;
Speak to him.

Phys. Madam, do you; 'tis fittest.

Cor. How does my royal lord? How fares your ma-
jesty?

Lear. You do me wrong to take me out o' th' grave.

[*Lear rises, and Cordelia supports him down to the
front of the Stage.*]

Cor. (r.) Speak to me, sir, who am I?

Lear. (c.) You are a soul in bliss; but I am bound
Upon a wheel of fire, which my own tears
Do scald like molten lead.

Cor. Sir, do you know me?

Lear. You are a spirit, I know; when did you die?

Cor. Still, still far wide.

Phys. Madam, he's scarce awake; he'll soon grow
more composed.

Lear. Where have I been? Where am I? Fair day
light?

I am mightily abused: I should even die with pity
To see another thus. I will not swear
These are my hands.

Cor. Oh, look upon me, sir,
And hold your hand in blessing o'er me. [*Lear attempts
to kneel.*]—Nay,
You must not kneel.

Lear. Pray, do not mock me;
I am a very foolish, fond old man,
Fourscore and upward; and, to deal plainly,
I fear I am not in my perfect mind.

Cor. Nay, then, farewell to patience! Witness for me

Ye mighty pow'rs, I ne'er complained till now !

Lear. Methinks, I should know you, and know this man ;

Yet I am doubtful ; for I'm mainly ignorant
What place this is ; and all the skill I have,
Remembers not these garments : nor do I know
Where I did sleep last night.—Pray, do not mock me ;
For, as I am a man, I think that lady
To be my child Cordelia.

Cor. Oh, my dear, dear father !

Lear. Be your tears wet ? Yes, faith ; pray, do not weep.

I know I have given thee cause, and am so humbled
With crosses since, that I could ask
Forgiveness of thee, were it possible
That thou couldst grant it ;
If thou hast poison for me, I will drink it,
Bless thee, and die.

Cor. (c.) Oh, pity, sir, a bleeding heart, and cease
This killing language.

Lear. (L.) Tell me, friends, where am I ?

Phys. (R.) In your own kingdom, sir.

Lear. Do not abuse me.

Phys. Be comforted, good madam, for the violence
Of his distemper's past ; we'll lead him in,
Nor trouble him, till he is better settled.
Will it please you, sir, walk into freer air ?

Lear. You must bear with me, I am old and foolish ;
Forget and forgive.

[*The Physician leads off King Lear, followed by two Knights, L.*

Cor. The gods restore you ! [A distant March.

Hark, I hear afar

The beaten drum. Old Kent's a man of's word.

Oh ! for an arm

Like the fierce thunderer's, when the earth-born sons
Stormed heaven, to fight this injured father's battle !

That I could shift my sex, and dye me deep

In his opposer's blood ! But, as I may,

With women's weapons, piety and pray'rs,

I'll aid his cause.—You never-erring gods,

Fight on his side, and thunder on his foes

Such tempests, as his poor aged head sustained !
 Your image suffers when a monarch bleeds ;
 'Tis your own cause ; for that your succours bring ;
 Revenge yourselves, and right an injured king. [*Exu, L.*]

SCENE II.—*The Camp of the British Forces, near Dover*
*Flourish.**

Enter EDMUND, REGAN, Officers, Banners, and Soldiers, L

Edm. (c.) Know of the Duke, if his last purpose hold
 Or, whether since he is advised by aught
 To change the course : He's full of alteration,
 And self reproving ; bring his constant pleasure.

[*To Officer, who exits, R.*]

Reg. (L.) Now, sweet lord,
 You know the goodness I intend upon you :
 Tell me, but truly, but then speak the truth,
 Do you not love my sister ?

Edm. In honoured love.

Reg. I never shall endure her.

[*Flourish*]

Edm. She and the duke her husband.

Enter ALBANY, GONERIL, and Soldiers, R.

Alb. (R. c.) Our very loving sister, well be met.
 Sir, this I hear, the king is come to his daughter,
 With others, whom the rigours of our state
 Forced to cry out.

Reg. Why is this reasoned ?

Gon. (R.) Combine together 'gainst the enemy :
 For these domestic and particular broils
 Are not to question here.

Alb. Let us then determine
 With the ancient of war, on our proceedings.

Edm. I shall attend you presently at your tent.

Reg. Sister, you'll go with us ?

Gon. No.

Reg. 'Tis most convenient ; pray you, go with us.

Gon. [*Aside.*] I know the riddle :—I will go.

As they are going out, L., enter EDGAR, disguised, R.

Edg. If e'er your grace had speech with man so poor,
 Hear me one word.

* This Scene is usually omitted in the Representation.

Alb. I'll overtake you.

[*Exeunt all but Albany and Edgar, L.*]

Alb. (c.) Speak!

Edg. (R.) Before you fight the battle, ope this letter
If you have victory, let the trumpet sound
For him that brought it: wretched though I seem,
I can produce a champion, that will prove
What is avouchéd there: If you miscarry,
Your business of the world hath so an end,
And machination ceases. Fortune love you!

Alb. Stay till I have read the letter.

Edg. I was forbid it.

When time shall serve, let but the herald cry,
And I'll appear again.

[*Exit, P.*]

Alb. Why, fare thee well; I will o'erlook thy paper

Re-enter EDMUND, L., with a folded paper.

Edm. The enemy's in view, draw up your powers.
Here is the guess of their true strength and forces,
By diligent discovery; but your haste
Is now urged on you.

Alb. We will greet the time.

[*Exit, L.*]

Edm. To both these sisters have I sworn my love;
Each jealous of the other, as the stung
Are of the adder. Which of them shall I take?
Both? one? or neither? To take the widow,
Exasperates, makes mad her sister Goneril;
And hardly shall I carry out my side,
Her husband being alive. Now, then, we'll use
His countenance for the battle; which being done,
Let her who would be rid of him, devise
His speedy taking off. As for the mercy
Which he intends to Lear and Cordelia—
The battle done, and they within our power,
Shall never see his pardon: for my state
Stands on me to defend, not to debate.

[*Exit, P.*]

SCENE III.—*A Valley near the Field of Battle.*

Enter EDGAR and GLOSTER, R. U. E.

Edg. Here, father, take the shadow of this tree
'Tis your good host; pray that the right may thrive:

If ever I return to you again,
I'll bring you comfort.

[*Exit, L.*

Glos. Grace go with you, sir. [*An alarum without, L.*
The fight grows hot; the whole war's now at work,
And the gored battle bleeds in every vein,
Whilst drums and trumpets drown loud slaughter's roar.
Where's Gloster now, that used to head the onset,
And scour the ranks where deadliest danger lay?
Here, like a shepherd, in a lonely shade,
Idle, unarmed, and list'ning to the fight.

No more of shelter, thou blind worm, but forth
To th' open field; the war may come this way,
And crush thee into rest. [*Advances a little.*

Oh, dark despair! When, Edgar, wilt thou come
To pardon, and dismiss me to the grave?

[*A retreat is sounded, L.*

Hark! a retreat the king, I fear, has lost.

Re-enter EDGAR, L.

Edg. Away, old man; give me your hand; away!

[*Crosses, R.*

King Lear has lost; he and his daughter ta'en:
Give me thy hand. Come on!

Glos. No farther, sir; a man may rot even here.

Edg. What! in ill thoughts again! Men must endure
Their going hence, ev'n as their coming hither.
Ripeness is all.—Come on!

Glos. And that's true, too. [*Exeunt, R.*

SCENE IV.—*The British Camp near Dover.*

*Enter, in conquest, with Banners, &c., EDMUND, L.—LEAR
and CORDELIA as prisoners, an Officer and four Sol-
diers preceding them, and the same number following,
L. S. E.—Flourish.*

Edm. (R.) Some officers take them away: good guard;
Until their greater pleasures first be known
That are to censure them.

Cor. (R. C.) [*Coming forward a little.*] We are not the
first,

Who, with best meaning, have incurred the worst
For thee, oppress'd king, am I cast down;

Myself could else out-frown false fortune's frown.
Shall we not see these daughters, and these sisters ?

Lear. (c.) No, no, no, no!—Come, let's away to prison :

We two alone will sing like birds i' th' cage
When thou dost ask my blessing, I'll kneel down,
And ask of thee forgiveness : so we'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
Talk of court news ; and we'll talk with them, too—
Who loses, and who wins ; who's in, who's out ;
In a walled prison, packs and sects of great ones,
That ebb and flow by the moon.

Edm. [*Crossing, L.*] Take them away !

[*Lear and Cordelia go forward, R*

Lear. (R. c.) Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,
The gods themselves throw incense. Have I caught thee
He that parts us, shall bring a brand from heaven,
And fire us hence, like foxes.

[*Officer on the R. advances a little, and motions them to follow.*

Wipe thine eyes ;
The goujeres shall devour them, flesh and fell,
Ere they shall make us weep ; we'll see them starve first !
Come. [*Exeunt Lear and Cordelia, preceded by Officer,
and followed by four Soldiers, R.*

Edm. (L.) Come hither, captain ; hark—

[*Officer comes down, R.*

Take thou this note ; [*Giving a paper.*] go, follow them
to prison :

One step I have advanced thee ; if thou dost
As this instructs thee, thou dost make thy way
To noble fortunes. Know thou this—that men
Are as the time is : to be tender-minded
Does not become a sword ; that great employment
Will not bear question : either say, thou'lt do't,
Or thrive by other means.

Off. I'll do't, my lord.

Edm. About it ; and write happy when thou hast done
Mark—I say instantly ; and carry it so,
As I have set it down.

Off. I will do it.

[*Exit, R.*

Flourish.—*Enter* ALBANY, GENERAL, REGAN, *Officers and Guards, &c.*

Alb. (c.) Sir, you have shown to-day your valiant strain,
And fortune led you well: you have the captives
Who were the opposites of this day's strife:
We do require them of you; so to use them,
As we shall find their merits and our safety
May equally determine.

Edm. (r.) Sir, I thought it fit
To send the old and miserable king
To some retention, and appointed guard;
Whose age has charms in it, whose title more,
To pluck the common bosom on his side,
And turn our impressed lancers in our eyes,
Which do command them. With him I sent the queen
My reason all the same; and they are ready
To-morrow, or at further space, to appear
Where you shall hold your session.

Alb. Sir, by your patience,
I hold you but a subject of this war,
Not as a brother.

Reg. (l.) That's as we list to grace him.
Methinks, our pleasure might have been demanded,
Ere you had spoke so far. He led our powers;
Bore the commission of my place and person;
The which immediacy may well stand up,
And call itself your brother.

Gon. (l. c.) Not so hot:
In his own grace he doth exalt himself,
More than in your advancement.

Reg. In my rights,
By me invested, he compeers the best. General,
[*Crosses to Edmund.*
Dispose of them, of me; the walls are thine:
Witness the world, that I create thee here
My lord and master!

Alb. The let-alone lies not in your good will.

Edm. Nor in thine, lord.

Alb. Half-blooded fellow, yes!

Reg. (r. c.) [*To Edmund.*] Let the drum strike, and
prove my title thine.

Alb. Stay yet ; hear reason : Edmund, I arrest thee
On capital treason ; and in thy arrest,
This gilded serpent : [*Pointing to Goneril.*] for your claim
fair sister,

I bar it in the interest of my wife :
'Tis she is sub-contracted to this lord,
And I, her husband, contradict your bans.
Thou art armed, Gloster : let the trumpet sound :
If none appear to prove upon thy person,
Thy heinous, manifest, and many treasons,
There is my pledge : [*Throwing down a Gauntlet.*] I'll
prove it on thy heart,
Ere I taste bread, thou art in nothing less
Than I have here proclaimed thee.

Reg. Sick, oh, sick !

Gon. If not, I'll ne'er trust poison. [*Exit, L.*]

Edm. There's my exchange : [*Throwing down Gauntlet.*] what in the world he is
That names me traitor, villain-like he lies.
Call by thy trumpet : he that dares approach,
On him, on you, (who not ?) I will maintain
My truth and honour firmly.

Alb. A herald, ho !

Edm. A herald, ho, a herald !

Alb. Trust to thy single virtue ; for thy soldiers,
All levied in my name, have in my name
Took their discharge.

Reg. This sickness grows upon me !

Enter HERALD, R.

Alb. She is not well ; convey her to my tent.

[*Regan is led off, L.*]

Come hither, Herald—Let the trumpet sound,
And read out this. [*Gives paper.*] Sound, trumpet.

[*Trumpet sounds, R.*]

Her. (R.) [*Reads.*] "If any man of quality, or degree,
within the lists of the army, will maintain upon Edmund,
supposed Earl of Gloster, that he is a manifold traitor, let
him appear at the third sound of the trumpet. He is bold
in his defence."

Edm. Sound !

[*1st Trumpet.*]

Her. Again ? [*2d Trumpet.*] Again !

[*3d Trumpet.*]

[*A Trumpet answers on L. three times*]

Enter EDGAR, L., at the end of the second sound.

Alb. (c.) Ask him his purposes, why he appears
Upon this call o' the trumpet.

Her. What are you?

Your name, your quality? and why you answer
This present summons?

Edg. (L.) Know, my name is lost;
By treason's tooth bare-gnawn, and canker-bit:
Yet am I noble as the adversary
I come to cope withal. *[Herald retires up.]*

Alb. [*A little up Stage, in c.*] Which is that adversary?

Edg. What's he that speaks for Edmund, Earl of Gloucester?

Edm. Himself! what say'st thou to him?

Edg. Draw thy sword;

That, if my speech offend a noble heart,
Thy arm may do thee justice:—here is mine.
Behold, it is the privilege of mine honours,
My oath, and my profession. I protest—
Maugre thy strength, youth, place, and eminence,
Despite thy victor sword, and fire-new fortune,
Thy valour, and thy heart—thou art a traitor!
False to thy gods, thy brother, and thy father:
Conspirant 'gainst this high illustrious prince;
And from the extremest upward of the head,
To the descent and dust beneath thy feet,
A most toad-spotted traitor. Say thou no,
This sword, this arm, and my best spirits, are bent
To prove upon thy heart, whereto I speak,
Thou liest.

Edm. In wisdom, I should ask thy name;
But since thy outside looks so fair and warlike,
And that thy tongue some say of breeding breathes
What safe and nicely I might well delay
By rule of knighthood, I disdain and spurn:
Back do I toss these treasons to thy head;
With the hell-hated lie o'erwhelm thy heart;
Which (for they yet glance by, and scarcely bruise,)
This sword of mine shall give them instant way,
Where they shall rest forever. Trumpets, speak!

[Alarums.—They fight.—Edmund falls.]

What you have charged me with, that ha e I done ;
 And more, much more : the time will bring it out ;
 'Tis past, and so am I.—But what art thou,
 That hast this fortune on me ? If thou art noble
 I do forgive thee.

Edg. Let's exchange charity.
 I am no less in blood than thou art, Edmund :
 If more, the more thou hast wronged me.
 My name is Edgar, and thy father's son.
 The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
 Make instruments to scourge us :
 The dark and vicious place where thee he got,
 Cost him his eyes.

Alb. Where have you hid yourself ?
 How have you known the mis'ries of your father ?

Edg. By nursing them, my lord.
 The bloody proclamation to escape,
 That followed me so near, taught me to shift
 Into a madman's rags ; became his guide,
 Led him, begged for him, saved him from despair ;
 Never (oh, fault !) revealed myself unto him,
 Until some half hour past, when I was armed.
 Not sure, though hoping of this good success,
 I asked his blessing, and from first to last
 Told him my pilgrimage : but his flawed heart,
 (Alack, too weak the conflict to support !)
 'Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief,
 Burst smilingly.

Edm. [*Raised by Officers.*] I pant for life :—some good
 I mean to do,
 Despite of my own nature. Quickly send—
 Be brief in it—to the castle ; for my writ
 Is on the life of Lear, and on Cordelia.

Edg. Who has the office ? Send thy token of reprieve.

Edm. Take my sword—give it the captain.

Alb. Haste thee, for thy life ! [*Exit Edgar, R.*
 The gods defend her !—Bear him hence awhile.

[*Flourish.*—*Edmund is led off, L.—Albany and others
 exeunt, R.*

SCENE V.—*A Prison.*

Enter LEAR, through opening in R. F with CORDELIA.

deaa, in his arms.—OFFICER enters, L. U. E., as on guard—*he remains at back, L.*

Lear. [*Advancing, c.*] Howl, howl, howl, howl! Oh,
ye are men of stones!

Had I your tongues and eyes, I'd use them so
That heaven's vault should crack.—Oh, she is gone for-
ever! [*Lear kneels on right knee, and places Cor-
delia across his left, her feet towards R.*

I know when one is dead, and when one lives;
She's dead as earth:—Lend me a looking-glass;
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
Why, then she lives.

Enter EDGAR, ALBANY, KENT, OFFICER, and Soldiers, R.
Officer marches the Soldiers up R., and back.

Kent. Is this the promised end?

Edg. Or image of that horror? [*Crosses behind Lear.*

Alb. Fall, and cease!

Lear. This feather stirs; she lives!—If it be so,
It is a chance that does redeem all sorrows
That ever I have felt.

Kent. (R. c.) [*Kneeling.*] Oh, my good master!

Lear. Pr'ythee, away!

Edg. (L. c.) 'Tis noble Kent, your friend.

Lear. A plague upon you, murderers, traitors, all!
I might have saved her; now she's gone forever!
Cordelia, Cordelia, stay a little!—Ha!
What is't thou say'st? Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle, and low; but I did kill the slave
That was a-hanging thee!

Offi. (L.) [*Advancing a little.*] 'Tis true, my lords, he
did.

Lear. Did I not, fellow?

I have seen the day, with my good biting faulchion,
I would have made them skip: I am old now,
And these same crosses spoil me. Who are you?
My eyes are none o' the best:—I'll tell you straight.

Kent. (R. c.) If fortune brag of two she loved and
hated,

One of them we behold.

Lear. This is a dull sight.—Are you not Kent?

Kent. The same ;

Your servant Kent.—Where is your servant Caius ?

Lear. He's a good fellow ; I can tell you that ;
He'll strike, and quickly, too :—He's dead and rotten.

Kent. No, my good lord ; I am the very man.

Lear. I'll see that straight.

Kent. That, from your first of difference and decay,
Have followed your sad steps.

Lear. You are welcome hither.

Kent. Nor no man else ; all's cheerless, dark, and
deadly.

Your eldest daughters have foredoomed themselves,
And desperately are dead.

Lear. Ay, so I think.

Kent. He knows not what he says ; and vain it is
That we present us to him. Oh, see ! see !

Lear. And my poor fool is hanged ! No, no, no life :
Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
And thou no breath at all ? [*Laying Cordelia on the
ground, and kneeling on both knees.*] Oh, thou wilt
come no more !

Never, never, never, never !

Pray you, undo this button. [*Placing his hand on his
throat, as if choking.*] Thank you, sir.

Do you see this ? Look on her—look—her lips—

[*Kisses her.*]

Look there—look there !

[*Gives a convulsive gasp, and falls back. He is sup-
ported on the R. by Kent, and on the L., by Edgar
— Curtain falls to slow music.*]

THE END.

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